

STAR FLEET BATTLES

# CAPTAIN'S LOG #8



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## ACT IV, SCENE IV

### THE PLAY BEGINS ANEW

This issue of Captain's Log brings you four "fourths" that together symbolize a new beginning for the Star Fleet Universe.

First, Captain's Log inaugurates its fourth format, following the scenario-heavy first three issues, the addenda-heavy #4 and #5, and the mixed-format #6 and #7. With #8 we bring you an expanded 80-page format with more of your favorite features and some new ones that the 48-page format could not accommodate. It has not been decided if this larger format will be permanent. We await your comments and opinions on that.

Second, the long-awaited fourth (and final) "Doomsday" Edition of Star Fleet Battles has begun reaching the stores, and this issue of Captain's Log will help explain the new Captain's Edition.

Third, our publisher, Task Force Games, is under new management, the fourth administration since the company began. (The first was the partnership held by Stephen Cole and Allen Eldridge; the second was the corporation held by Allen Eldridge; the third was a subsidiary of New World Computing.) The new fourth administration is TFG President John Olsen, who acquired the corporation from New World in April 90 and moved it back to Amarillo, Texas. John Olsen wants all SFB players to know that Doomsday is the First priority of the company.

And our fourth and final fourth is the new Block 4 format for SSDs, as will be seen by the two new ships found in the back of this issue. This new format, seen in the Captain's (Doomsday) Edition, incorporates many significant improvements over the previous designs, such as drone reload check-off boxes and numbered phasers.

Editor-in-Chief ..... Stephen V Cole  
Executive Editor ..... Leanna M Cole  
Managing Editor ..... Steven P Petrick  
Publisher ..... John Olsen  
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Cover Painting..... Michael Winterbauer  
Art on page 17, 19, 22, 23, 28. Ken Mayfield  
Art on page 61.....Reynold Wong  
Chief of ADB Security .....Blackie  
ADB Security Staff..... Waylon, R Rex  
Printing ..... Southwestern Publications  
Covers Printed by..... Standard Printing

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### PUBLISHER'S INFORMATION

Captain's Log #8 was created by Amarillo Design and published by Task Force Games, Post Office Box 50145, Amarillo, TX 79159. Captain's Log is not available by subscription. Contact Task Force Games to order spare parts (or to obtain a list), replacement of defective or missing parts, or anything relating to TFG products other than Star Fleet products. Include a stamped self-addressed envelope.

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# Escape From the Holdfast

by Jim Hart

★ Bridge, Klingon Escort *Safeguard* ★

Lt. Commander Kiroth strode onto the bridge amid the excited noises of battle. The Condition Amber alarms were still sounding throughout the ship as the tall, angular Klingon rounded the operations console and headed for the captain's chair. The lowered lighting on the bridge made the displays on the walls and panels seem brilliantly lit. On the main viewer, the object of the alarm shone against a sea of starry black.

Lt. Kenthas stood from the captain's seat and returned to the Weapons station. On a small ship like the E4, the Executive Officer also filled a regular duty position. In this case, XO Kenthas was also the Senior Weapons Officer. Kiroth threw himself into the seat, sunk into its accustomed feel, and snapped, "Tactical!"

The captain's chair seemed just a bit too warm.

The viewscreen in front of him changed from the long-range view of the Orion Light Raider to a computer-simulated image of the space around him. Three freighters were arrayed behind the *Safeguard*. Behind them, the E4 *Keeper* brought up the rear in a defensive position. "Power to all weapons systems," Kiroth said. "Ready drone rack."

"Yes, sir."

"Raise the *Keeper*. Coded and scrambled."

"*Keeper* responding, Captain."

"On audio."

The voice of Lt. Commander Kidra of the *Keeper* came over the air. To Kiroth, it seemed to waver, as though Kidra sometimes spoke directly into Kiroth's ear, sometimes from the bottom of a well. Probably subspace interference.

"*Keeper*, this is *Safeguard*."

"We hear you, *Safeguard*. Go ahead."

"Tactics, Kidra. Any suggestions?"

"One of us alone is no match for the Raider."

"Certainly. The two of us together may be no match. At best, we stand only a thin chance." Kiroth kept the discussion going. Kidra was, in Kiroth's opinion, a better tactician, but sometimes reluctant to take the lead.

"But together is our best chance."

"We shall coordinate fire with you. But from where should we fire?"

There was a brief silence. Then, Kidra continued. "Keep the convoy moving at warp one point eight. I suggest that we launch all shuttles to provide additional firepower and defense. When the Pirate comes in to grab a freighter, we'll turn out to stop him. We cannot allow him to get within tractor range of the convoy. If he does, we cannot defend them. This is going to be a one-action battle."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean," Kidra continued, "that our only chance is to wait until his attack run, then turn into his attack. We go in together, as one. Close to point-blank, as one. Fire together, launch drones together. With that, we may do it enough damage that the survivor can finish him off."

"Survivor?"

Kidra answered. "That's right. I have to assume that he has enough firepower to destroy one of us. He may not, and if so, we are lucky. But if he does not have that kind of firepower, he shouldn't be here at all."

"True." Kiroth could understand that.

"So, we go in. Hold drones to the last second, fire at point-blank."

"Let's go."

Kiroth looked down into the crew sections below him. "Kenthas, overload disruptors. Pilot, warp two."

"Yes, Captain."

"Visual."

The screen melted again into the view of the Orion ship. The Light Raider was as small as the *Safeguard*, but you never knew what you were in for. Orion Roulette. If he's got disruptors, we will survive. If he has photon torpedoes, we shall die. What has he got? Who will he use them on?

Finally, the Pirate made his run. The view of the Orion grew on the screen. Three times, the magnification was stepped down to keep the ship from filling the entire viewer. Kiroth began to sweat. The intruder made no effort to evade the two ships. Sweat ran into his eyes and obscured his vision.

He had never sweat on the bridge before.

The view shifted once again. The sensor operator counted down the range like a well-crafted chronometer. Fifty thousand. Forty thousand. But where was his left arm? Thirty thousand. Kiroth clutched his uniform, wringing it in his hands. As the Pirate grew on the screen, a scream grew in his throat. The prow of the intruder seemed to grin like a skull from the dust. The mouth opened to swallow the *Safeguard*, whole. Kiroth wiped the sweat from his forehead. He heard the roaring laugh of the Orion as his mouth opened to consume him.

You can't hear anything in space.

On the screen, in front of his eyes, the pointed prow of the Raider shifted and flowed into the beak of a great bird of prey. Kiroth howled. The huge blyak beat its wings and arched his back. Kiroth tried to shout orders, but the words failed him. Then, the great beast reached out with its clawed talon, ripping the *Keeper*. The tiny ship fired its weapons into the bird, but they had no effect. The *Keeper* was brought up, into the beak of the monster. Crushed.

"Kidra," Kiroth shouted.

The communications officer turned to Kiroth, a trickle of blood running down from his hairline. He spoke slowly, quietly, like a requiem bell tolling a death. "On screen, Captain."

Kiroth turned to the screen to see the burning, smoke-filled bridge of the *Safeguard's* twin. Kidra's command chair was turned away from him as Kidra whispered orders to his crew. His voice lisped and crackled, like that of an old man. The chair turned.

And Kiroth looked up into a face of death. Kidra's head was burned down to the skull. Blood poured down his arms, and fire smoldered in his eyes. As Kiroth watched, the ghastly mouth opened, spoke. "Space is Death. We cannot conquer; we can only be destroyed. Death will take us all!"

Kiroth turned away from the sight on the screen, the echo of Kidra's words pounding on his ears. "Visual."

When he opened his eyes, he saw the beast on the viewer, unchanged, but now the claw reached for the *Safeguard*. Around him, the crew sat stolidly at their positions, quietly, moving slowly, as though unaware of the scene of destruction that unfolded before them. Kiroth watched all weapons fire into the maw of the gargantuan scavenger, but there was no effect. Kiroth was powerless, hopeless. The alarm began to sound louder over his head as lights began to flash across his eyes. The main viewer exploded in a blindingly brilliant dazzle that threatened to burn his optic nerves. He threw his arms over his head and howled. The klaxon deafened him as the blinding light poured through his eyelids. *Safeguard* exploded around him.

★ Non-Assigned Officer's Quarters, ★  
★ Klingon Starbase 9 ★

Kiroth sat up, the sound of his own scream still echoing around him. The alarm buzzer rang in his ears, demanding attention. Accordingly, the room lights were on, blinding his sleepy eyes. The covers of his bed clung to him, dampened by his own sweat. His hands were knotted into a fistful of the spread. "Alarm off," he said, and crawled into the refresher to try collect his thoughts.

The dream had begun to come back. Right after the battle that had wrecked the *Keeper*, and Kiroth's friend Kidra, the dreams had begun. Their mutual attack had forced the Orion to withdraw, but at the expense of the *Keeper's* commander, and much of her crew. Kiroth's conscience kept reminding him, through this dream, that only the whim of the Orion had destroyed Kidra and allowed him to live. *Keeper* had been badly damaged. When they returned to starbase, she had been scrapped.

Kiroth remembered the inspection he made of the *Keeper* as the *Safeguard* towed it home. He remembered seeing Kidra lying in a pool of blood. He remembered looks of resentment from the crew, hating Kiroth because Kiroth had survived and their leader had not. Kiroth felt that he was worthy of their hate.

Kiroth stared into the mirror as he threw cold water into his face, trying to wipe away the memory of the dream. He could still hear the dying screams of the *Keeper's* bridge crew as two type-V drones impacted the ship, gutting the tiny frigate. Kidra had no time to identify them and fired one phaser at each, betting that they were regular drones, and losing. You never know the house odds when you're playing Orion Roulette.

As he showered, Kiroth thought of the six months since his arrival at Starbase 9. He remembered the shuttle trip after his arrival, as Admiral Kirientha told him that he would oversee the construction of the *Vandal*, a new F5 frigate, and turn his own ship over to his Exec. Later, he was promoted to full Commander and told that he would command the *Vandal* after it was committed to the fleet. Kiroth always wondered, why did they wait to tell me I would command it? Usually, the commander would be told up front. Had they meant the ship for some other commander? Kidra, perhaps? Did he owe his position to the death of his friend? To a death that could have easily been his own?

During construction, the dreams had almost gone away. But now they returned with full force. Kiroth could guess why. Today, *Vandal* was to be committed to the fleet. Kiroth and his new crew would take possession of her, begin her shakedown cruise, then be assigned to their new home. After three years of command in convoy duty, Kiroth was finally to join a battle fleet, the elite Tholian Border Squadron. Convoy duty had nearly killed him. No wonder he dreamed of death, now that he was going to a battle fleet. Death was sure to be close on his heels.

Donning his uniform, Kiroth thought of the troubles he would encounter. A new ship always had some kinks in it to be worked out. A new crew was not going to work well together in the beginning. Many of his new crew had been transferred from the *Keeper*, and they already resented him. Plus, crew members that were sent to the Fleet Replacement Bureau for reassignment were not usually the best.

Then again, neither was Kiroth. When Lt. Kryam came to escort him to the Ceremony of Commitment, Kiroth followed with a confident step, but a troubled mind.

★ Klingon Frigate *Vandal* ★

Kiroth was tied down to a dark floor. The room was huge, with a black floor that reflected nothing and stark white walls that illuminated everything while revealing nothing. He looked at his bonds, but could not find anything holding him. He only knew that he could not move. He looked around. On his left, he saw an old Klingon. The face was away from him, but Kiroth knew instinctively that it was Kidra. How had he aged? Why?

An almost silent clank echoed above him. He looked up. Nothing. He looked back at Kidra. Nothing. The black floor began to be lit with tiny, irregular pinpoints of light, like stars. He looked up. Far above him, he saw a tiny dot appear. What?

Kidra stirred. Kiroth spoke his name, and the aged version of his friend answered with a grunt. Kiroth looked up again. The dot had grown into a recognizable shape. A piece of ship's hull plating. The metal panel seemed impossibly small, as though it was miles away.

"Kidra, what should we do?"

An ancient, dusty voice responded. "Wait."

"Wait? If we wait, we'll be killed!"

"So?" Kidra turned towards him and Kiroth could see that he had not aged...his body had been blasted by fire. His eyes were empty sockets and his face a grim and skeletal mask. "Why run? Why do anything? You can't avoid it, can you?"

"I can try!"

"Why? Waste of effort."

Kiroth looked away from the grisly face of his friend. The plate was much closer now. Kiroth could see that it had writing on it, but he couldn't make it out at this distance. The plate spun, taking the inscription out of his field of view.

"I don't want to die like this, Kidra."

"I died this way, Kiroth. I could no more escape death than you can. It had to be me or you. It was me. Now it's you."

The plate came nearer and nearer, rushing down at tremendous speeds. Just as it slammed home, it turned enough for Kiroth to see the writing.

Kiroth sat bolt upright, his heart pounding in his chest, sweat clinging to him, a noise like a great pounding of metal echoing in his ears. The room lights came on, and Kiroth saw, on the desk across from his bed, the name of his dream, the omen of his death that rushed inescapably toward him.

VANDAL

★ Bridge, Klingon Frigate *Vandal* ★

Kiroth had been anxious to get back into space, hoping that the new situations would push the old memories out of his mind. Finally, the moment had come. All tests had been passed and the shakedown cruise was over. *Vandal* was on its way to the Tholian Border Squadron, where both the *Vandal* and Kiroth would be tested in combat.

Commander Kiroth had taken the opportunity of the long trip to the Tholian Border to acquaint himself with his new ship and crew. Very few of the officers and crew from the *Safeguard* had been available, mostly in the technical ranks. His command staff had, of course, stayed with the ship. The *Safeguard* had a reputation for excellence that Kiroth used to take pride in. How Kiroth wished that he could have a few of those officers back. He had picked up a number of crew from the *Keeper*, particularly in Engineering, but Kiroth was very unsure of their loyalty. There was no way he could measure up to Kidra in their eyes, and they resented him simply for his continued existence, when Kidra was dead.



As in all military organizations, ship captains tried to hang on to their best officers and men. Thus, the personnel files that made it to the Fleet Replacement Bureau were those of officers who were untried, or tried and found lacking. There would be many hours of testing before Kiroth knew all of the facets of his crew.

He had picked Lt. Commander Krill as his Executive Officer. Krill was a childhood friend of Kiroth's, but the rigors of their training, and the fact that Krill was three years younger, had kept them apart for all of their military careers. The young man had been brash, loud, swaggering, and arrogant, much like Kiroth had been himself, five years ago. His files described him as 'very able, tactically innovative, but overconfident, perhaps dangerously so.' His service record read like a log of all the ships in the fleet. It seemed that Krill had been transferred a lot by commanders who, for some reason, didn't like him. But there were no bad marks of any kind on his record. Kiroth had decided to take his old friend on and see if the position of responsibility, and his own patient overseeing, would mold a potential ship's commander out of the young officer.

Lt. Kasomia, the new Senior Watch Officer, was of a totally different mettle, and it was with Krill in mind that Kiroth had selected Kasomia for his position. Kasomia had been the officer assigned to oversee the construction of the *Vandal* in its first stages, before Kiroth had taken over the job. Lt. Kasomia was much older than Krill, older even than Kiroth. His record showed a black mark that had bought the man a reduction in rank. That sort of mark never goes away, however, and Kasomia had been promoted very slowly after that. Also, there were other entries that interested Kiroth. It seemed that Kasomia had become a different person after the catastrophe against the Hydrans. The marks had changed from high praise to simple acknowledgement of duties completed satisfactorily. Kiroth was eager to find out why. And, having seen the *Vandal* built from the keel up, Kasomia was sure to know it in every detail.

The Junior watch officer, Lt. Kryam, was also well known to Kiroth. He was the officer who had been assigned to Kiroth as his aide on Starbase 9. Kryam had asked, and Kiroth had responded by requesting the young officer for his crew. Kryam had served several tours in all five departments of a ship and was fully qualified. His assignment to the starbase had been an administrative position to help him learn how sector organization worked. Kryam had been a junior navigator on the *Deathslayer* before his assignment to starbase duty. Kryam just might turn out to be a good officer. He had certainly proven indispensable on the starbase.

Despite the fact that Kiroth had prior knowledge of all his senior officers, he was still nervous. He had never seen them where it counted...in battle.

Lt. Kasomia had the conn when Kiroth and Krill entered the bridge. Kiroth had learned many things about his new command in the month since they had shipped from the starbase. As his file suggested, Krill was a shade too aggressive and had a quick temper when his officers made mistakes. Kasomia, on the other hand, was too timid, almost shy, and terribly underconfident. The one time Kiroth had put him in command during a mock combat, Kasomia had shown no bravery, no style, and though he had won the engagement, it was a near thing.

In the same situation, the Junior Watch Officer, Lt. Kryam, had overjudged the abilities of the *Vandal* and nearly been destroyed. Only a clever ruse had allowed the *Vandal* to escape. However, it was here that Kryam could learn the abilities that would make him a good captain. Of all his senior officers, Kiroth thought that Kryam would, someday, make the best captain. All he needed was experience.

As he walked onto the bridge, Kasomia stood from the command chair and saluted. "Kai, Captain. We approach our

new home." Lt. Kemas, the ship's chief of security, stood to one side of the door. Kemas was the one officer whom Kiroth did not directly select from all of those available. As was customary, the Empire Security Service provided five officers from whom to choose, and after eliminating the obvious prima donnas, he had asked for Kemas. Kiroth approved of the appointment plan. This way, security officers owed no loyalty to any commander. Their job required them to remain aloof and impersonal. Kiroth did not even place comments in Kemas' records, nor in those of any security officer. Kiroth could make notes and send those in, but they were rarely used.

On the view screen, Kiroth could see the growing planet and the base station that circled it. This base was on the Tholian Border and home of the famous Harassment Fleet. Commodore Korgal of the *IKV Darkslayer* was the Fleet Commander. Kiroth knew him to be a Klingon of good reputation and considerable fighting skill. He had been one of the captains in Admiral Kirientha's squadron when the Hydran breakthrough was repulsed in Y138. He owed his position here to the Admiral, and to his abilities.

Captain Kiroth took the offered command chair. Turning to the Communications Officer, he ordered, "Raise the base."

"Yes, Captain. Base Station 18, this is the *Vandal*. Respond."

He was answered almost immediately. "This is Base Station 18. Commodore Korgal would speak with your captain."

Kiroth nodded. "Visual."

"On screen."

The picture of the approaching planet was replaced by that of a large Klingon in Commodore's insignia. Kiroth noted the impressed looks on the faces of his bridge crew. Korgal was by far one of the most impressive Klingons he had ever seen. Although he was approaching middle age, Korgal's uniform strained to contain the bulging muscles within it. With Korgal's arms folded across his chest, he looked more like a creature of legend than a man of flesh and blood. When he spoke, his voice resonated like thunder.

"Welcome, *Vandal*. We salute your first voyage. And welcome also, Captain Kiroth. We salute your new command."

"We are honored to serve you, Commodore," Kiroth replied. "I have long looked forward to joining a fleet with a strong and respected leader."

"Report to my office when you arrive, Captain," Korgal ordered. "I shall introduce your officers to the other captains of the squadron. Soon, we shall test that new ship of yours. Again, welcome. Korgal out." His image faded from the screen.

"Now there," Krill said, "was a Klingon."

Kiroth nodded. "He does inspire respect."

"Or fear," Kasomia added.

"Whatever he inspires," Kiroth said, "he is a commander that any Klingon would follow. Even into death."

Kasomia shook his head. "Let us hope that death is not our destination."

Krill looked at the Senior Watch Officer. "Death is every Klingon's destination, as it is for every other living thing. The trick is to die with the most glory you can, taking as many of the enemy as you can when you go."

"I do not believe that death is a desirable goal."

"No," Krill added. "But serving the Empire is. And sometimes, that service means death."

Kiroth broke them up. "Krill," he asked, "do you seek death here?"

"To die gloriously in combat is the ultimate service one can pay the Empire. I am here to serve."

"Kasomia, do you seek death here?" Kiroth asked his Senior Watch Officer.

The old officer shook his head. "No. I serve the Empire in whatever meager way the Empire will allow, but I do not think that death is the ultimate goal. Death is the end of your service, and nothing more. I will survive if I can, to continue serving."

Lt. Kryam stepped out of the lift as Kasomia finished his sentence. "Why so gloomy, Kasomia?"

"The Captain," Krill said, "was asking our opinion about death. What's yours?"

"Death," the young officer repeated. "I never thought about it, really."

"Do you seek death," Kiroth asked, "or do you seek to escape it?"

Kryam shrugged. "I don't know. You could say that I don't know death. I don't believe in my own death."

"Then you deny death?"

"I suppose so," Kryam answered.

"What about you, Captain?" Krill asked. "Do you seek death, or do you run away from it?"

"Neither," Kiroth answered. "Death seeks me. It will find me, in time. To run is simply a waste of energy. To embrace death is sheer madness. I await death. When it comes, I will be ready."

"To fight, or to flee?"

Kiroth look at his XO with barely contained horror. "To die."

#### ★ Briefing Room, Klingon Base Station 18 ★

The briefing room was silent as Commodore Korgal walked onto the stage. Captain Kiroth sat in the section of the small auditorium that was assigned to the *Vandal* and her crew. Krill sat beside him, with the rest of his senior officers close by. When Korgal appeared, all stood and saluted him. He returned the salute and ordered them back to their seats.

"Today," he began, "we embark on a course to regain the Empire's lost pride." Several in the room murmured about that statement. "Seventy years ago, the Tholians arrived in our galaxy, taking Klingon planets as their own. Although we tried, we could not remove them from the space that was ours. Fifty years ago, we nearly crushed the Tholians, but a wall of their web around the home world blunted our attack and robbed us of victory. Thirty-nine years ago," he continued, "as the war with the Federation began, the Tholians whom we patrol against committed a crime upon the Empire. In a raid both daring and underhanded, they crossed the border of their tiny Holdfast and into Imperial Space. When they returned home, they had stolen the secret of disruptors from us.

"At the time, the Empire was too busy with concerns along the Federation border to retaliate. Since then, we have seldom had a space in which to contemplate any action against the Holdfast. They have stolen our space, our planets, and our weapons. Their theft and their audacity are a spear in the side of the Empire. Every time they fire at Klingon ships with our own weapons, that spear is twisted, and the Empire groans."

He walked off the stage and down the aisle, an impressive figure towering over the seated officers. "Today, the Empire has been at peace for eight years. Much too long have we been content to sit at home. Also, much too long have the Tholians been an embarrassment to the Empire. Today, we set upon the course that will crush them." The assembled officers nodded among themselves. This was the kind of speech that gave spirit to the Klingons. Already, they felt the thrill of the coming battles.

Korgal returned to the stage. "Our fleet has been strengthened and given a new purpose. For many years, the Border Squadron has simply watched, waited. Now, it is up to us to start the first rockfall of the avalanche. It is our given duty to repay the Tholians the debt we owe them. We shall enter the Holdfast and steal the secret of web technology. With that

secret, we shall launch our attack. With that secret, they cannot defend their planets against us."

Kiroth's eyes widened. This was a bold stroke. He turned to Krill and saw the light of battle fever already rising in his Executive. "Krill!"

The officer turned to him. "Sir?"

"Remain calm. Listen."

Krill swallowed reflexively. "Yes, sir."

"Lights," Korgal said. The lights in the room dimmed as Korgal continued. On the screen behind him, a map of the local area glowed. "This is a map of the Western Holdfast defenses. Many areas are defended by web, but many are simply patrolled by their tiny ships and destroyers." He touched a panel and a golden line appeared on the screen. "We shall enter the Holdfast along this route, slowly. When we reach this point," he indicated the terminus of the line, "we will lie in wait for a Tholian patrol vessel. When one appears, we shall strike quickly and use the Marine force from the *Widowmaker* to board the ship. After transporting a crew onto it, we shall either fly it or tow it back home."

Kiroth nodded approval. It was a bold plan; one that was certain to begin a war that would remove the Tholian menace from the Empire's southern borders. With the Tholians gone, the Empire would be free to attack in other directions: even against the Romulans if they chose.

Korgal continued. "Our entry into the Holdfast must go unnoticed. Many fleet ships will be conducting diversionary actions to aid this purpose. However, it is essential that the attack force remain unseen until the trap is sprung. Therefore, we will send one ship in ahead of the squadron to scout for enemy vessels. Captain Kiroth?"

"Sir?"

"*Vandal* will be the lead ship."

"Yes, sir," Kiroth wondered about that. *Why put the newest ship, and the newest ship commander, in such an important position? Why wasn't the Vandal put in one of the diversionary forces?* As the briefing completed Kiroth looked beside him to see Krill scowling. "What is it, Krill?"

Krill's eyes lanced Kiroth's own. "We draw the point."

"I thought that would excite you."

The Executive Officer shook his head. "No, it does not. I feel that we are sent ahead as a slave to his death. Consider, should we meet a sizable enemy force, we will have to hold it long enough for the squadron to arrive. If we cannot, and the Tholians are warned, we will be blamed for the failure of the mission. Perhaps we will be destroyed. In either case, I think that we have little chance of garnering glory and a great chance of death or dishonor."

"Weren't you the one who said that death was the ultimate way of serving the Empire?"

"Death, yes," Krill ended, "not suicide."

Kiroth nodded.

"You may report to Admiral Korgal now," said an aide.

Kiroth stood and saluted.

#### ★ Admiral's Office, Klingon Base Station 18 ★

Kiroth and Krill entered Commodore Korgal's office. "Ah, Kiroth," the huge Klingon said. "Come in. Have a seat." He indicated chairs.

Kiroth sat. "You know my Exec, Commander Krill."

"Yes," Korgal continued. "I suppose you want to know why the *Vandal* drew point duty."

"Actually," Kiroth began, "I had already assumed that we drew point duty because we were the most expendable. I really wanted to talk about certain situations that may come up while we are on point."



"First," Korgal began, "you're wrong. *Vandal* was assigned the lead spot because it's the best frigate in the squadron. I've seen your record, and, even though this is your first mission in the *Vandal*, I think I can depend upon you more than any other frigate commander in the squadron. Korq got his command through political influence, though he wears it well. He was appointed to the Harassment Squadron by his father, Imperial Ambassador Torrka. Kertoth rode his father's reputation to his position. He's an able man, good to have at your back, but I wouldn't want him on independent assignments of this importance. You're the man I want out there. You got command the way I did. You worked for it. You did everything right. *Vandal's* not out there because she's expendable. She's out there because you command her."

"I am honored," Kiroth replied, although he was running through what he had read of the other captains.

"Good. Now, what were the questions you wanted to ask?"

## ★ Transporter Room, Klingon Frigate *Vandal* ★

As they stepped down from the transporter platform, Krill stopped Kiroth with a touch on the arm. "What do you think?"

"Of what?"

"Of Commodore Korgal's explanation?"

Kiroth looked past Krill, his eyes seeming to bore into the metal wall of the base. "Have you read the service records of Korq and Kertoth?"

"Yes, sir."

"Your opinion, then?"

"Have you ever hunted blyak on Grinmarias?"

Kiroth nodded. Once, he had been on a blyak hunting party during an R&R period on Starbase 4. The huge, winged beasts were three hundred pounds of savage fury and predator strength. A freshly killed woodhog would be laid as bait, then the Klingon hunter would wait for the awesome bird to arrive. Then, as the blyak was eating his meal, the Klingon would attack. Brave Klingons went bare-handed. Less heroic Klingons carried a knife.

Kiroth remembered his dreams. Odd that Krill should strike so close to the center of Kiroth's fear. "You think we are the woodhog?"

Krill nodded. "And I think that Korgal said what he said just to calm you down. Or to get your fighting spirit up."

Kiroth resumed the walk to the bridge. "To bait a trap. I suppose it is worth it, to the Empire, to trade a brand new F5 and an untried crew for the web technology."

"I remember," Krill said, "that you awaited death and would accept it when it came."

"I shall. I do. But I had hoped to have a little more time. What of you? Do you consider it good to sacrifice yourself so that the Empire can win a Tholian war?"

"No," Krill said. "I don't."

"But this is what you say you are here for. To die in service to the Empire."

"I said 'to die gloriously.' I see no glory in this. All I see is a laughing face with pointing teeth, waiting to tear me to pieces and laugh over the remains."

Kiroth jerked his head at the comment. "Do you see this often?"

Krill glanced back, quizzically. "No. Why do you ask?"

"Nothing." Kiroth strode away toward the bridge.

Krill watched his captain stride away and wondered, "Now what was that all about." The Exec began to worry that the pressure was perhaps beginning to show on his captain.

## ★ Bridge, Klingon Frigate *Vandal* ★

Slowly, the *Vandal* picked its way through the asteroid belt. They had been on the point now for two days, avoiding enemy contact, hiding, sneaking their way through the occasional asteroid clusters. Kiroth knew that these huge rocks had not appeared here naturally, but had been placed here by the Tholians to help guard their borders and serve as defensive positions for their ships. Not only did they necessitate that ships move slowly through them, they made perfect anchor points through which webs could be strung.

Kiroth studied the tactical display. "Helm, thirty degrees to port." He used his chair console to highlight a developing path in the asteroid fields. "Follow this course."

"Yes, Captain."

They had been creeping through this belt of asteroids for two hours now. Finally, they had reached the ambush point. "Krill."

"Captain?"

"Anything on scanners?"

"No enemy vessels, Captain."

"Anything on communications?"

"No signals, Captain."

"How far behind us is the squadron?"

"At their assigned speed," Krill said, "they will arrive in one hour."

Kiroth looked around the bridge. "We have done well. We have arrived without being seen. Now, we wait. Full stop. Begin continuous scanning. Go to passive fire control. Power down all engines and non-essential systems. Keep the phasers charged and the drone rack ready."

*Vandal* came to a halt in the edge of the rocks. Like a panther, it awaited passing prey.

## ★ Commander's Ready Room, ★ ★ Tholian Patrol Corvette *Solitude* ★

Commander Vriss was happily bored. After six weeks of debate and discussion about defensive policy with other commanders and higher officers, he was back on patrol. The conference had been long, and the debates spirited, but many of the participants had been idiots. Some of the younger ones had advocated moving the planet yet again to try and find another place where they would not be caught between warring parties. Vriss thought that they only wanted to move Tholia because they had missed the spectacle of its earlier transportation.

The Expansionist factions in the council had wanted to launch attacks, taking more space from their neighbors. But that was foolishness. The Tholian planets could not support a fleet even a fraction of the size it would need to combat, say, the Klingon Empire. The Homeworld factions wanted to close the defenses more tightly around the homeworld and have every Tholian move back there, keeping it behind a wall of web and retreating from the destiny of the stars.

Vriss would have none of it. Though he lacked power in the Fleets, his voice in the council was a voice that others followed. Time and again he had represented the Fleets in the Council, and as yet, the will of the Fleets ruled the Council. Tholian space belonged to the Tholians now, despite prior claims. Never again would they be forced from their home stars.

Of course, home stars must be watched. Recent indications from the scouting reports showed an increase in Klingon activity, and incidents along the border had found a better quality commander at the helm of many ships. The Defense Force had increased patrols on the Klingon border, but thus far, nothing had happened. Nevertheless, *Solitude* moved at a

leisurely warp two, examining the perimeter defenses of the Holdfast, looking for weaknesses, holes, signs of trouble, and Klingons.

Worker Prime Hrish signaled the Commander from his station on the sweltering bridge. "Yes, Hrish?"

"Mid-watch report, Commander Vriss. We have detected a minor anomaly in defensive cluster Alpha-four."

"We shall investigate it. Give the orders. Log the report and continue."

Vriss flicked off the panel and returned to his contemplation of the star array before him. It was a hologram of the night sky of one of the old Tholian worlds, from back before the move. Vriss' father had passed along his own father's views of the old Empire. It was the duty of Vriss' generation, and of every generation that would follow, to make sure that the Tholians never forgot their history, never forgot that they were exiles from their own homes. As he watched the moving hologram, he whispered the names of those forgotten stars to himself and thought about the lost planets that still circled through those velvet skies.

Vriss sighed. Consigning himself to his fate, he waved a hand and the hologram disappeared, to be replaced with the view forward of the *Solitude*. Asteroids sped past on the right and left as the tiny ship patrolled a gap between the asteroid belts.

★ Bridge, Klingon Frigate *Vandal* ★

Aboard the *Vandal*, time passed slowly. Captain Kiroth kept his officers alert by occasional questions to each of them, forcing them to concentrate on their duties. From time to time, Lt. Commander Krill would make a round of all the stations, firing off a question or order to supplement the incoming information.

"Navigation, how long before the arrival of the squadron?"

"Twelve minutes, twenty-six seconds, sir."

Krill folded his hands behind his back and moved across the lower platform of the bridge. As he passed the captain, he nodded. Kiroth answered, indicating that Krill was doing a good job. The Exec approached the sensor arrays. "Anything on long-range scan?"

"Asteroids, only, sir. Between them and our passive sensor arrays, it's hard to see anything at all. No ships in the..." He hesitated. "Correction. A ship just entered long-range detection."

Kiroth spun his chair to face the technician. "Type?"

"I cannot be certain at this range, but it is either a patrol craft or maybe a destroyer. Closing through the gap at warp two."

"Range?"

"Three hundred thousand kilometers."

"How long before the squadron arrives," Kiroth snapped.

"Eleven minutes, eighteen seconds."

Krill turned to the captain. "That's a long time to try and hold a ship here."

"Yes. But hold it we must."

"Yes, Captain."

"How long before the Tholian enters weapons range."

"One minute, Captain."

Kiroth nodded. "Call Condition Amber. Prepare to jam communications on my signal."

The sensor officer looked up. "Ship is a patrol craft, Captain. Not enough warp signature to be a destroyer."

Kiroth nodded. That would help. "Range?"

"Two hundred and ten thousand kilometers."

"Status?"

"They are closing with their shields down. No, shields just came on."

"They've seen us. Begin powering the disruptors. Prepare to increase speed, at my signal. Communications, signal the squadron, tight beam. Contact with enemy; we are attacking."

"Yes, sir."

"Begin jamming as soon as the message is off."

"Yes, sir."

Kiroth looked around his bridge confidently. But in his mind, he still saw the falling plating that haunted his dreams.

★ Bridge, Klingon Command Cruiser *Deathslayer* ★

Commodore Korgal received the message from the *Vandal* with trepidation. From here, there were several options. One was to sacrifice the *Vandal* and return to base. This would allow the squadron to come in again, later. It would, of course, sacrifice the *Vandal* as well, but that would be an acceptable loss if it promoted the needs of the Empire. Another option was to speed up and attempt to help the *Vandal*, but that would alert the local defenses to the presence of large numbers of Klingons, thus making this the one and only try they would get. The final option was to continue moving in slowly and hope that the *Vandal* could hold or defeat the enemy ship. However, reinforcements would no doubt be arriving soon.

Korgal rested his chin on his palm and thought. What was better for the Empire?

Reaching a conclusion, he sat up. "Hold course, Helm. We continue as planned."

"Yes, sir."

Korgal studied the screen and prayed that the *Vandal* could hold the enemy ship long enough for the squadron to arrive. There was something about Kiroth that made Korgal think that he wasn't the commander that the *Vandal* needed in this situation. Something well-hidden, but definitely there. Still, he was betting on Kiroth, knowing that it wasn't a good bet, and knowing he couldn't afford to lose.

★ Bridge, Tholian Patrol Corvette *Solitude* ★

The dimming lights and the sudden screeching of the ship intercom startled Commander Vriss from his reverie. He immediately swarmed out of the Ready Room and into the Bridge. "Worker Prime Hrish, what is the cause of this?"

"Sir, we have a ship on our screens. Klingon."

"Activate shields."

"Shields on."

"Communications, raise Command Central. Inform them of our situation."

"Yes, sir."

"Activate weapons systems. Sensors, what class vessel is the enemy?"

"Klingon F5, sir."

Vriss considered that. The little ship packed more of a punch than the *Solitude*, but if Vriss could hold it here long enough for Command Central to get the word and reinforcements to arrive, then the ship could be easily dispatched and the Holdfast defended. Vriss made his decision in a split-second. "We shall defend ourselves against them and attempt to hold position. Pilot Worker, stay at as long a range as possible. Use our superior maneuverability to keep fresh shields to the enemy."

"Yes, sir."

"Weapons Worker, keep phasers available at all times for defensive fire."

"Yes, sir."

"Commander, communications are being jammed by the Klingon."

"Did our message get out?"



"No, Commander."

Vriss nodded as he studied the tactical display. A good Klingon commander would not have let the message get out. Recent reports did indicate that the commanders seemed to be edging up in quality.

Perhaps this was a seasoned commander, with many missions to his credit. Perhaps it was a newly-promoted captain, unused to command or to the Tholians. Vriss would not know until it was much, much too late.

## ★ Bridge, Klingon Frigate *Vandal* ★

Kiroth tapped a datadisk on the arm of the command chair. He was having ideas, and he liked them. They seemed to make the memory of his dream fade.

"Krill."

"Yes, Captain?"

"Have all boarding parties report to the transporter rooms, including the two from the *Widowmaker*. If we get a chance, I want to try and board that ship."

"Board it, Captain?"

"Yes. Wouldn't it be glorious if we already had control of the ship when the squadron arrived?"

Krill smiled. "Or met them on our way out with it."

"I see you understand."

"I do. Shall we have excess personnel form militia squads?"

"Yes. Good idea, although they must complete their present assignments. Best wait until we begin transporting the marines."

"I shall inform Marine Lt. Mojrad."

Krill walked back to his station and gave the necessary orders. His voice echoed over the ship-wide intercom, informing non-essential personnel to rally at pre-arranged points for militia duty.

Kiroth started snapping orders. "Helm, maximum speed. Weapons Officer, status."

"All stations show ready."

"Close with the enemy. Power to transporters. Hold reserve power for tractor beam."

"Yes, Captain."

"Range?"

"One hundred eighty thousand. Enemy turning off, heading into the asteroids."

"Probably attempting to escape us. Increase speed as fast as the engines will take it."

"Yes, sir."

"Enemy increasing speed," Krill reported. "Warp two point four."

## ★ Bridge, Tholian Patrol Corvette *Solitude* ★

"Klingon increasing speed, Commander. Intercept course and closing at warp two point five."

Commander Vriss accepted the incoming stream of information silently. His eyes were glued to the tactical display in front of him. His internal glow had begun to shade from its customary blue. Now, it was a purple, lit with red fringes. The colors of battle. "Maintain range. Fire two phasers to clear our path through the asteroids."

"Yes, Captain."

"Prepare to increase speed after firing."

"Course plotted."

"Very well." Now, they wait again.

## ★ Base Planner's Office, Tholian Base Station 2 ★

Deeper within the Holdfast, a young Sensor Worker rushed into the Base Planner's office. His screechy voice grated from the exertion. "Planner."

Base Planner Gafib looked up from his reports. "Yes, Worker?"

"We are receiving subspace jamming from Defense Sector Delta Prime."

"Are there any ships in that area?"

"The Patrol Corvette *Solitude*, Planner."

"Have you tried to raise her?"

"Yes, Planner. No response. We could not penetrate the jamming."

Gafib didn't even think. In these cases, his response was as natural as gravity. "Have two ships from adjacent sectors converge on her last known position. Who has command of the defenses in that sector?"

"Captain Jirrin of the cruiser *Arrakk*."

"Raise them and give the order. Seek and defend."

"Yes, Planner." The Worker ran from the room.

After he left, the Planner picked up his writing stylus, regarded it for a moment, then dropped it. Standing, he left the office and headed for the Defense Center, following the anxious Worker at a leisurely pace. Planners never hurry. It's bad for morale.

## ★ Bridge, Klingon Frigate *Vandal* ★

The two ships closed with one another as the *Vandal* emerged from the asteroid belt. Captain Kiroth glanced around the bridge and noticed the looks of concentration on his crewmen. They were paying careful attention to their duties. Even Krill had steadied down when Condition Amber had gone into effect. Perhaps he wasn't as bad as Kiroth had thought. Kiroth wished that Krill had been on the *Safeguard*. It would have helped his evaluation of the officer now.

"Range," Kiroth barked.

"Still one hundred eighty thousand."

"Enemy speed."

"Still at warp two point four."

"They're up to something," Krill said.

"What, Krill?"

"I suggest, sir, that they have something under their sash. They're not trying to run, else they'd have turned farther. Also, they're not attempting to attack. What are they hoping for?"

Only one answer, Kiroth thought. "They expect to be reinforced. And since they don't know about the incoming fleet, they think it's safe to hold us here until their reinforcements arrive."

"Of course," Krill said. "For a moment, I forgot that they don't know what WE have under OUR sash. Our jamming would have alerted every station from here to the Romulan Empire."

Kiroth considered this. "Perhaps they were expecting relief soon anyway. They could get help as soon as five minutes, as long as thirty. We don't know."

"Perhaps. It will be a bad day if they are reinforced soon."

"Not necessarily. Their relief would be a ship of the same class. Another PC would not pose a great problem. The fleet will arrive before the two could destroy us. Nevertheless, we must make short work of this ship, if we can."

"Approaching asteroid field, sir," the Helm said.

"Fire phasers to clear a path. Continue at warp two point one."

★ Bridge, Tholian Patrol Corvette *Solitude* ★

Vriss looked at the tactical display. The Klingon was coming through the asteroid field, and *Solitude* needed to turn around and head back toward its patrol route. Otherwise, relief ships would have to hunt for them. *Solitude* was in the clear, however, between two bands of asteroid belt. "Pilot Worker, begin erratic maneuvers."

"Erratic maneuvers, aye, sir."

Vriss steadied himself as the internal gravity compensators fought to maintain steady fields in response to the Helm's rapid course alterations.

"Klingon course unchanged, Captain. Still closing."

★ Bridge, Klingon Frigate *Vandal* ★

"Captain."

"Yes, Krill?"

"Our disruptors are nearing the end of their charge cycle, but the Tholian has begun erratic maneuvers. Should we fire?"

"Yes, go ahead. Recharge them immediately, standard loads. As we emerge from the asteroids, increase speed and intercept. Launch drone."

"Yes, sir."

The Weapons officer leaned over his board. "Disruptors firing. One hit, no significant damage. Drone away."

"Increasing speed," the helm announced. "Warp two point seven."

"Continue closing. Krill."

"Yes, Captain."

"Inform Force Commander Mojrad that his chance will be soon."

"Aye, Captain."

"Also, inform Kasomia and the second officers in all departments that they may be needed to serve as crew of the captured vessel. They must be ready to go at a second's notice. As for you," Kiroth smiled, "Better practice your command bearing. You'll take charge of the Spider ship should we succeed."

"Yes, sir."

"Captain."

"Yes, Helm?"

"Tholian turning, Captain. Back toward us."

Kiroth thought. Some new attack strategy? No, simply returning towards the asteroid belt, where their webs could be anchored and the detrimental effects of the asteroids themselves would protect them. Inside the belt, they could wait all day for the reinforcements they thought were coming. Kiroth did not have all day. "Close to point-blank range. Prepare to fire phasers. Divert disruptor power to a tractor beam. We must hold them. Launch another drone."

"Drone away."

"Krill, have Marines report to the shuttle bay for transfer."

"Yes, Captain."

"How long before the fleet arrives?"

"Eight minutes, sir."

Kiroth shook his head. "Not a lot of time to capture a ship."

★ Transporter Room, Klingon Frigate *Vandal* ★

Security Chief Kemas was presiding over the distribution of disruptors and sabers to the incoming militia squad, watching as his junior officers took their identification numbers and filed them with the computer. It would be his duty, when they returned, to make sure that all the weapons were returned or accounted for. One hidden weapon on a disgruntled crewman was all it took to

start a mutiny, and Kemas knew it. That was one thing he would not allow.

Marine Lt. Mojrad was instructing the commanders of his boarding parties in the staff room adjacent to the main transporter room. "Squads Three and Four, you are assigned to take and secure the web devices." He pointed to a map on the wall. "According to our sources, all Tholian PC-class ships are alike in every detail. Ships of this class that we have captured show this to be their structure. Squads Nine and Ten," he indicated the two boarding parties on loan from the *Widowmaker*, "will transfer by shuttle and take and hold the impulse engine room."

"Squads Five and Six, with the militia squads, will take the main warp drives. Your first duty is to find and disconnect the self-destruction apparatus. You will be beamed into this recreation area, Marines followed by militia after the area is secure. No one should be there at battle stations, but you never know. Squad One is assigned to take the auxiliary control room, and Squad Two will be under my command. We will take the bridge. Squads Seven and Eight will be on reserve to respond to any calls. Any questions?" He waited. "All right. Once the warp engine room is secure, Squad Five and the militia squads are free to assist. Tell your squads and form up. One and Two will beam in last, prepared to fight. Dismissed."

After his squad leaders had returned to their men, Mojrad walked over to Kemas and shook his head. "Problems?" the Security Chief asked.

"I just have to take and secure a Tholian ship in less than seven minutes. No problem."

"I thought not," Kemas said as he continued to watch his staff hand out weapons and communicators.

★ Bridge, Tholian Patrol Corvette *Solitude* ★

Vriss glanced at the tactical display. His turn away from the Klingon had brought him out of the asteroid belt and into open space. If possible, he wanted the intruder to be inside the belt when the reinforcing ships arrived. It also helped to protect them from Klingon fire. The only way to get there, though, was past the Klingon. Somehow, he found the thought disquieting. But he wasn't completely unarmed. "Pilot Worker, plot a course back to the asteroids. Drop erratic maneuvering and fire two phasers at the ship as it approaches. Hold the remaining phasers for defensive fire against the drones. If they shoot, turn a fresh shield to them immediately."

"Yes, Captain."

"Anything on long-range scan?"

"No, Captain. No reinforcements."

Had they decided to abandon us, Vriss thought? No, it was only three minutes ago that they discovered the subspace jamming. It would still be some minutes before any ships could arrive. "Position?"

"Range, one hundred thousand, Klingon on intercept course. Pulling ahead of the drones."

"We will take one shot from them," Vriss said, "then attempt to retreat into the asteroid belt. By the time they get turned around, it will be several minutes before they can catch us again."

"Yes, sir."

"Reserve power to shield reinforcement."

"Yes, sir. Power to shield six."



## ★ Bridge, Klingon Frigate *Vandal* ★

Krill counted down the range to the Tholian vessel. "Sixty thousand...fifty...forty...thirty...twenty...ten..."

"Enemy firing." The ship rocked slightly.

Kiroth's voice, calm but firm, said, "Attach tractor beam."

The *Vandal* lurched as the tractor slowed the ship. "Beam attached, sir. Enemy vessel held. Minimal power requirement."

"Good. Do we have them on the oblique?"

"Yes, sir."

"Fire enough phasers to bring that shield down. Have transporters standing by. What damage did their fire do?"

"They fired only two phasers, sir. Forward shield down twenty percent. Our phasers firing. Facing shield down. Minor internal damage."

"After they fire at the drones, drop our facing shield and beam the boarding parties on."

"No good," Krill said from the XO's station. "They will have turned a shield to us by then."

Kiroth glanced up at the tactical display. "So they will. Very well, we shall wait."

"If we wait, Captain," Krill said, "we will lose the chance to capture them ourselves. And, their reinforcements may arrive at any time."

"Perhaps, Krill. But we must not take damage if it can be avoided. The mission comes first, not the glory of the ship. As for their reinforcements, if they arrive, we will cut and run for the fleet, drawing the Tholians behind us."

Krill looked back at his console, dejected. "I suppose you are right. We must do our duty. Still, to capture them would be glorious, would it not?"

"It would. And we may have a chance yet. Patience, Krill, is a quality you need to acquire."

The Executive Officer nodded as he turned back to his viewer. "Enemy changing facing, sir. Now showing their forward shield."

"The drones?"

"First drone destroyed. Second...also destroyed. Curse the luck."

## ★ Bridge, Tholian Patrol Corvette *Solitude* ★

His internal colorings had turned from red to pale blue, showing that Commander Vriss was worried. Why was the Klingon vessel holding them? Should they not destroy the *Solitude* as quickly as possible and retire before reinforcements arrive? What were they planning?

Well, if nothing else, the tractor link meant that the two ships would not be going anywhere for a while. "Worker Prime Hrish," he screeched, "do not attempt to fight the tractor. Use all power for defense. Keep a fresh shield to them at all times, and keep that shield reinforced. No movement. Remain stationary, tactical rotations only."

"Yes, Commander," he replied.

Let's see how long we can last against them.

"Have the drones been destroyed?"

"Yes."

"Energize two phasers. Hold them for defensive fire only."

"Done, Commander."

## ★ Defense Action Center, Tholian Base Station 2 ★

Base Planner Gafib stood in the Defense Center of Command Central Base. "Communications Worker, any word from the *Solitude*?"

"None, Planner. Subspace jamming is still in effect."

"Tactical display," Gafib ordered.

"Tactical display on main viewer," he repeated. A response came from the great floor of the Center, and the main viewer resolved into a display of the *Solitude*'s patrol sector and all adjacent sectors. Positions of known ships in the area appeared as greenish dots crawling across the screen.

The Planner studied it. "Have all units outside of the response zone close and establish a defensive perimeter around the sector."

"Yes, sir. Calls going out now."

"Have you made contact with the *Arrrakk*?"

"Yes, Planner. Commander Jirrin and the *Arrrakk* en route to the *Solitude*'s patrol location."

"Very well. Keep me informed."

"Yes, Planner."

## ★ Bridge, Klingon Frigate *Vandal* ★

Kiroth had been steadily battering down the shields of the *Solitude* for several minutes now. Each time a shield went down, the *Solitude* would turn, showing a different shield. Each firing had been carefully calculated to bring the shield down with as little excess damage as possible. Kiroth did not want to risk damaging the web devices. Still, the little cruiser had paid dearly each time. Also, the *Vandal* had begun to drag the *Solitude* back towards the path they would follow on their escape. With luck, the *Vandal* would find the Fleet before the Tholians found the *Vandal*.

Finally, the phasers battered down the last shield of the Tholian ship. "Begin transporting boarding parties into the Engineering spaces. Launch the shuttlecraft."

"Shuttle away, Captain."

"Transporters activated. Boarding parties appearing in the Tholian ship."

## ★ Bridge, Tholian Patrol Corvette *Solitude* ★

"Commander."

Vriss looked up from his tactical display, where he had been wondering where his reinforcements were. "Yes, Worker Prime?"

"We are being boarded, Captain. A shuttle has just been launched and is heading for our bay. We have no way to destroy it or tractor it. Enemy Marines appearing near the Engineering section. And the web generators."

"The webs? We cannot allow that. Have all boarding parties converge on the Engineering section and the webs. Place one unit at the main exits from the web generators. Have the crew begin to arm themselves. We may need every man. Remind them that the Klingons cannot stand our heat and atmosphere. Simply puncturing their suits will be sufficient to kill them."

Hrish gave the orders, then returned to the communicator. "Should I begin preparations for self-destruct sequence, Commander?"

"Yes," Vriss said. "Standard procedure, you know. Also, have the Workers in the Web Control Room destroy the devices and any information pertaining to them. They may get us, but they won't get the webs."

"Yes, sir."

★ Deck Four, Tholian Patrol Corvette *Solitude* ★

Klingon Marine Squad Three had oriented itself quickly and was jogging down the corridor to the Web Generator Room. The spotlights on their helmets guided them down the dark corridors. As suspected, infrared goggles were worse than useless in this four-hundred-degree environment. Although the pressure suits they wore were built to take high temperatures, each man was beginning to sweat.

At the corridor turn leading to the Web room, Squad Leader Mok stopped. A hasty signal passed to one of his men ordered him to cross the corridor at the intersection and provide covering fire from the side. As the marine dived across the hall, a dozen beams of energy crisscrossed the air around him, slicing open his environment suit. The superheated atmosphere of the Tholian ship quickly reduced his body to ashes. The Tholians had set a defensive position at this corner to catch the Klingons in a crossfire. Mok signalled a retreat to come around and try to attack from behind the forward defensive position. As one, his squad melted back into the shadows, turning off their spotlights as they went.

Behind him, the Tholian squad leader began marshalling his forces, guessing where the intruders would go, and making plans to welcome them aboard.

★ Deck Two, Tholian Patrol Corvette *Solitude*. ★

Lt. Mojrad had deployed his forces well. While he listened to reports from other sections, he and his squad crept quietly through the infernal heat of the Tholian ship. His point man glanced around a corner, then waved the squad onward. The number two man took the point, his disruptor rifle held in front, running crouched over, prepared to duck for cover if needed. He trotted around the corner without pause, and the rest of the squad followed. The man who had looked first now guarded the rear of the advancing party as they made their way toward the bridge. Mojrad hoped that the captain of this bucket hadn't decided to save his own skin and heavily guard the corridors to the bridge. But the Marine commander knew that he didn't have enough time, and there was always the possibility that Squad Five couldn't stop the self-destruct sequence.

★ Bridge, Tholian Patrol Corvette *Solitude* ★

"Commander, we have lost contact with the Impulse deck and the port web generator. Starboard generator reports enemy contact, then they seemed to leave. They have destroyed the web device, as per your orders."

Vriss inclined his upper body, nodding assent. His internal play of lights had faded to an even gray, the color of fear. "That was to be expected, Hrish. We shall lose contact with most of the ship before it is over. Have the militia units been formed?"

"Yes, sir."

"Have them fall back and defend the Control Room."

"Yes, sir."

★ Deck Four, Tholian Patrol Corvette *Solitude* ★

Squad Leader Mok waved his men forward. After a confusing few minutes, they had found a way around the Tholian defensive position and were moving along a corridor sure to come upon them unaware. Light-intensifier goggles helped cut the heat shimmer from the corridor, but water had an uncanny desire to condense on the outside of the helmet.

No, it couldn't possibly be water. Not at 400 degrees.

The thought was cut off in mid-contemplation as two doors five meters down the corridor opened on either side. A vaguely-

glowing crystalline hand popped out of each doorway, followed by a triangular-eyed head. Each hand fired the phaser it contained, and two of Mok's men winked away. From behind, Mok heard the sound of hand-to-hand combat as more Tholians rushed the squad from the rear. Mok realized that he had walked into an ambush. As the knowledge that he had led his men to their deaths crossed his mind, a phaser blast gently embraced him and Squad Leader Mok disappeared as though he had never existed.

★ Deck Two, Tholian Patrol Corvette *Solitude* ★

The Marine glanced around the corner and immediately pulled his head back. A hand phaser burst blew out a section of the wall behind him. Mojrad cursed. They were near the Bridge, and for the first time they were encountering enemy fire. He had hoped that the Tholian commander would concentrate his forces on holding Engineering and the webs, thus clearing a path for his squad to make for the Bridge unopposed. But here was opposition, staring him in the face.

"Dace, Grith, dive across and commence fire. Jartrin, cover their move."

Jartrin stuck his rifle around the corner and fired while two other Marines took a diving roll to cover on the other side of the corridor. When they were in position, Mojrad handed a grenade to Srib, the Slidarian Marine sergeant. Srib armed it and waited. On Mojrad's signal, four Marines set up a covering fire while Srib leaned out and threw the grenade down the hall. It clattered across the floor, the sound almost lost in the deep-throated rumble of the disruptor rifles.

As the sound died, Mojrad heard the clatter as a Tholian grenade rolled to a stop against the corridor wall. Mojrad shouted "Cover!" and dove for the floor, as far from the grenade as he could leap. The sound of the double explosion reverberated through Mojrad's very bones. Shards of shrapnel bounced off his armor with a high-pitched ticking sound. The corridor shook as the deadly missiles made contact with their enemies. After the shrapnel had stopped impacting the corridor wall, Mojrad reviewed his squad. Srib and Dace dead, Grith dying as heat leaked in through a hole in his environment suit, cooking him alive. Mojrad flew to the young Marine and quickly tried to patch the gaping hole in his suit, but the shrapnel that had torn the hole had also torn Grith's abdomen. Even if the suit could be repaired, Grith would not live.

Jartrin again stuck his head around the corner. Down the hall, he saw only twisted lumps that might once have been Tholians. He waited for Mojrad's nodded permission, then waved his arm and took off down the corridor at a quick trot. The rest followed in his wake.

As he passed the crumpled forms of the dead aliens, Mojrad noticed that they were wearing what passed, for Tholians, as regular duty uniforms. These were not Marines then, but regular crew. If that was all they had left to send against him, maybe he would get to the bridge after all.

★ Bridge, Tholian Patrol Corvette *Solitude* ★

Vriss had replaced his tactical display with a security monitor of the *Solitude's* interior systems. As the incoming Marines took more and more of the ship, systems winked out. Impulse drive was now in the hands of the invaders, as well as the Emergency Bridge and life support systems for the rear two thirds of the hull. The Tholian militia squads were being cut down like children. The only regular Marine unit left had destroyed one Klingon unit and was heading for the Warp Drive room, hoping to swing the battle there. In a desperate attempt to hold the Bridge, Vriss had armed the bridge crew and sent them



## HISTORY

to defend the central corridor. They had not reported in the last minute.

Glancing around the Command Room, Vriss felt totally cut off from his ship mates. Here, alone in the control room that was the heart of the ship, Vriss felt very alone. He called Hrish for a report on the corridor defense, but received no response. He could only suppose that they had been taken or killed.

As commander of the vessel, he knew that the last duty to the Holdfast was his to make. The security monitor showed that the Warp drive room was still in doubt, so the self-destruct mechanism would still be in the hands of his own people. He turned to give the final command and seal the death of his ship.

As he turned to give his last command, he noticed several blips on the long-range scanner. To his delight, he saw a ship emerging from the far asteroid belt. The reinforcements had arrived! The *Solitude* had held! Vriss breathed a sign of relief as his internal glow began to shade back up from gray to blue. He touched a button to get an identification on the ship.

CLASS ..... KLINGON D7 BATTLECRUISER  
CREW ..... 450  
PHASERS ..... 9 CLASS 2 PHASERS  
WEAPONS ..... 4 DISRUPTORS  
DRONES ..... 2 TYPE A DRONE RACKS

More information followed, but Vriss had no time for it. More ships were emerging from the asteroids, in formation on the lead D7. He had only one chance to save his crew from capture. He called, "Computer, activate self-destruct..."

As he began the message, the bulkhead door behind him blew inward, throwing Vriss forward into the command console, a thousand fragments of steel and plastic imbedded into his back. Lt. Mojrad stepped through the door and fired his disruptor rifle into Vriss' already lifeless body, just to make sure.

The towering Klingon lifted the communicator from his belt and signaled the *Vandal*. "Mojrad to *Vandal*."

Kiroth's voice responded. "Go ahead, Mojrad."

"We have taken the bridge, Captain. Warp drive is in our hands. The ship is ours."

"Very good, Mojrad. My compliments on a great victory. Prepare to receive the relief crew."

"Standing by." Mojrad placed the communicator on his belt and turned to the squad that had taken the bridge. "Great victory! Kai, the Empire! Kai, the *Vandal*! Kai, the Marines!"

His squad threw up gauntleted salutes. Behind them, the new bridge crew, Executive Officer Krill in the forefront, glittered silently into view. The Marine squad repeated their salute to their new captain.

### ★ Bridge, Klingon Frigate *Vandal* ★

The *Darkslayer* drew alongside the *Vandal*, and *Vandal* dropped the tractor beam to the *Solitude*, allowing the *Darkslayer* to pick it up. Kiroth beamed in pride as the screen lit with the features of Commodore Korgal. "*Vandal*, Kiroth, you have done well. You have saved us much time by taking the ship. Is it manned?"

"Yes, Commodore," Kiroth answered. "My first officer, Krill, has transported aboard with a crew. It is damaged, and cannot make high warp speeds, but one of the web devices is intact."

"Very good. I am pleased, but not surprised. All ships, prepare to depart! Reverse heading out of the Holdfast." He paused for a moment. "We have a ship on long range scan. Form on the *Darkslayer* and protect the captured ship. Fly! Korgal out!"

### ★ Bridge, Klingon Frigate *Vandal* ★

Kiroth spun his chair around. Looking around the bridge, he saw that Ensign Kryam had replaced Krill in the Executive Officer's position. Krill and Kasomia had transported over to the captured Tholian ship, leaving Kryam the senior officer on board. "Kryam."

"Yes, Captain," the young officer returned, his voice a study in control and radiating confidence.

"Take charge of the long-range scans, 360 degrees. Do you track the vessel that the commodore mentioned?"

Kryam nodded. "Just coming into range now, Captain. I'm afraid that the more powerful sensors on the larger ships are always going to pick things up a bit faster than we."

"Of course. Continue scanning, in any case. Helm, take position behind the *Darkslayer*. Match whatever speed she's making, and protect Krill's ship."

"Yes, Captain."

"Another ship on long-range scan, Captain."

"Can you identify either of the ships?"

Kryam shook his head. "Not positively, not at this range. Just from inference, I'd guess that one is a PC or destroyer. The new one appears to be larger, probably one of the new C-class cruisers we were warned about."

So far, Kiroth thought, nothing the fleet can't handle. But what else is out there?

### ★ Bridge, Tholian Cruiser *Arrakk* ★

On board the Tholian Cruiser *Arrakk*, things were starting to heat up. A recent call from Defense Central had informed Commander Jirrin that he was going to have command of all ships in the area to use in defense of the Holdfast. Sensor scans showed that the *Solitude* was being towed away by one of the Klingon ships, and the Klingon force was large. They must have brought a sizable portion of the Harassment Fleet with them. He needed some way to slow them down while more reinforcements arrived.

The Defense Center's earlier orders had called for all ships in adjoining sectors to prepare defenses against the Klingons. Perhaps those could be used to some advantage. "Communication Worker."

The response came instantly. "Yes, Commander?"

"Use our most recent code. Call all adjoining sectors and gather information on their efforts to halt the escape of the Klingon vessels. Also, inform all converging ships of the Klingon's position and speed. Have ships coming in pace them, but never enter sensor range of the Klingons."

"It shall be done, Commander."

Jirrin sat back, calmly awaiting a response. He was interested to see what sort of trap he could lay for these invaders. Thirty years of service had given Jirrin a calm confidence in the Holdfast's ability to protect itself. The capture of the *Solitude*, however, represented the greatest threat to the Holdfast in his years of service. Should the Klingons puzzle out the secrets of the web, their next attack would surely overwhelm the tiny fleets of the infant empire. And that could not be allowed. He would try to save the *Solitude*, but if that failed, he would destroy it without hesitation.

As he waited, he thought about his old friend, Vriss. His old enemy, Vriss. Political power in the Council was not always equal to rank in the Fleets, and though Jirrin outranked Vriss in the fleets, Vriss had always held more political sway. Although they were often at each other's throats in the council, they had shared many a meal together, hammering out policy. Despite their differences, there was a mutual respect. In the council, Vriss was a wily old Tholian. In the Fleet, though, his tactics

were standard and unexceptional. Thus, Vriss had risen no farther in the Fleets than his Patrol Corvette command.

Ah, Vriss, he thought. How did you allow your ship to be taken? Why did you not destroy her? Are you still there, held at gunpoint, or did you pay the ultimate price in defense of the Holdfast? Are you even now on the way back to those home stars that you so loved to talk about?

Jirrin was snapped out of his reverie by the Communications Worker. "Commander."

"Yes."

"Report on adjacent sector defenses is ready."

"Good. Send it to me." Now, he thought, we will see how we can stop these Klingons.

#### ★ Bridge, Klingon Frigate *Vandal* ★

"Sensor report, sir," Kryam announced. "Still, no new ships on the scanners. The two we had before are pacing us, not closing at all."

"Probably waiting for more ships to arrive before attacking. Have the computers figured out that code of theirs yet."

"No sir," Kryam answered. "And the chance of their figuring out anything worth knowing in time to do us any good is almost zero. It will take the DSF headquarters cryptology department a month, at least, to puzzle through this. We just don't have the resources."

Kryam's muscles bunched together as he stared into the scanners. "Another ship, sir. No, two more. Bearing 154.23."

"Type?"

"Another PC-class ship, Captain. They're beginning to build up a large enough force to come in on us. In fact, they are coming in on us. All Tholian ships increasing speed, changing to an intercept course."

The communication officer piped in. "Incoming communication from the *Darkslayer*."

"On screen."

Commodore Korgal faded into the main viewer. "All ships," he said, "prepare to alter course. New heading 176.39." His features faded from the screen.

Kiroth checked his memory, then concluded, "We're running away from them. Helm, alter course. Continue to track on the *Darkslayer*."

"Yes, Captain."

#### ★ Bridge, Tholian Patrol Corvette *Solitude* ★

Krill stood, arms crossed, on the main bridge of the *Solitude*. Kasomia, the new ship's first officer, was busily repairing some of the control panels in the bridge. The going was tough, partially because Kasomia did not understand the alien technology, partially because he was constrained to work in a vacuum suit. Krill was decidedly uncomfortable himself. Sweat was beginning to form on his nose and drip down his neckline. However, his techs had said that there was nothing to be done. The Tholian life support equipment, designed to keep the ship at 400 degrees even in open space, simply was not capable of bringing the ship's environment down to something that a Klingon could stand. Turning it off would leave vacuum.

Their biggest problem at the moment was the fact that the sand-headed chief engineer of this bucket had powered down the warp drive when he started hearing explosions. Krill had half impulse power only. Just enough to keep the shields up if he had shields. Which he was very aware that he did not. The chief engineer's mate from the *Vandal* was trying to puzzle out the foreign equipment and get him some power. Some techs who were experienced in Tholian ships had beamed over from the

*Widowmaker*, but they were spread very thinly. At the moment, Krill felt about as helpless as a baby in a blyaaak's nest.

The Tholians on board had refused to help at all, even after Krill had killed several of them for not obeying his orders. He didn't have time to torture them all, so he had rounded them up into what had been a dining hall on the tiny ship. All corridors leading to the room had been closed off and the atmosphere evacuated. If the Tholians decided to leave, they'd not get far.

"Kasomia, estimate on repair time for the sensors?"

The aged lieutenant backed out of the control panel. "About ten seconds, I think." He stood and put away his tools. "Not everything in our technical manuals was correct, it seems." Kasomia dropped a book, titled "Internal Systems of Tholian Ships," and prepared by the Klingon Galactic Bureau, onto the deck. Leaning over the triangular console, he snapped a switch. A series of viewers ranged in a circle around the bridge lit up. On them, they gave a 360-degree view outside the ship of a torus ring 20 degrees in width, radiating from the ship. "An interesting theory of viewers, I thought," Kasomia added. He pointed to a ball on the sensor operator's console. "This controls the angle. Currently, as you can see, the *Darkslayer* is in front of us. Spin the ball ninety degrees, like so." As he spun the ball, the Universe wheeled around the viewers in a dizzying circle. The *Darkslayer* came to rest on Krill's right. "Now, what we see on the forward screens is actually the view to port. On your left, you can see the *Vandal*, which is actually behind us." Krill looked and saw the *Vandal* following them, like a vulture perched and defensive over her young.

"Good job, Kasomia. Are there long-range sensors, as well?"

"Yes," the lieutenant answered. "It's all tied into the same system. What we see here on the screens is a computer-generated re-creation of the incoming sensor data. There's a sliding control here that sets the range of the scan and a viewer on the console that reports details. Of course, it reports them in Tholian, so they don't do us a lot of good."

"Sir," one of the techs said.

"Yes, what is it?"

"I read Tholian, sir."

Krill stared through the young man. "You do?"

"Yes, sir. I learned it as a part of the study team that took one of these ships apart last year. I was sent on this raid by Intelligence to work in that capacity."

Kasomia came up to him. "What's your name, Tech?"

"Kij, sir. Junior Engineering Tech Kij."

Krill glanced up at Kasomia. "Well, for the rest of your stay on this ship, you are Acting Senior Sensor Tech Kij. Kasomia, he's your man."

"Yes, sir. Come here, Kij. I want you to read to me."

Krill stared around the bridge of his first command. It was a clunker, it was a Tholian, it was small, and it was infernally hot. But right now, Krill thought it was the most wonderful, efficient ship in the Empire. His feeling of helplessness had disappeared.

"Captain."

"Yes."

"Engineering, sir. They're ready to reactivate the warp drive."

Krill smiled, his pointed teeth gleaming white in the semi-darkness of the Tholian bridge.

## ★ Bridge, Tholian Cruiser *Arrakk* ★

Jirrin sat quietly in his chair upon the *Arrakk*, watching the asteroids slide by to either side of his ship. His ruse was working so far. But he would soon need to add another log to the fire. He watched the line of the Klingon flight path as it meandered slowly across his tactical display. Projected lines, based on communications with other ships, showed the positions of the Tholians in the area. A wide red rectangle showed the area of the trap. Jirrin had been very lucky to find this area. A new ship was being tested here that could prove invaluable to his plan. The Klingons were headed at an angle to it, not knowing their danger. Soon, Jirrin would throw the next log on the fire, and the Klingons, running like Galthorian Sand Jumpers, would fall directly into the red rectangle that meant death.

As he watched, the Klingons neared the contact point.

"Communications."

"Yes, Captain."

"Send the next signal. Phase Two."

"Yes, sir."

As he watched, one of the little dots representing a Tholian ship changed course, inching towards the Klingon fleet.

## ★ Bridge, Klingon Frigate *Vandal* ★

"Captain," Kryam said.

"Yes, Ensign?"

"Another ship, Patrol Corvette size, bearing 256.23. Almost dead ahead of us."

"Tactical display."

"Aye. On screen."

The screen faded and was replaced with an overlay map of the local area, as perceived by the ship's sensors. Just ahead, and a little to starboard of the squadron's line, a tiny dot appeared in yellow, moving toward the Klingon force.

"Commodore Korgal, sir."

"On the small viewer, Comm."

"Yes, sir." Over the communications console, a small screen came to life, framing the massive features of Commodore Korgal. "To all ships," he said, "We cannot afford to be engaged still so deep inside the Holdfast. Evasive course, 145.02. Execute." The screen returned to its blackness.

"Helm, change course."

"Yes, sir. New heading established." Kryam glanced over at another sensor readout that had just caught his attention. "Sir, Commander Krill's ship has just activated their warp drive and are adding their speed to that of the *Darkslayer*."

"Increase speed to match." Good job, Krill.

Kryam was still hunched over the sensors. When he spoke, his voice sounded a little querulous, as if he saw something, but didn't believe it. "Captain, the Tholian ships have reduced speed. Continuing to pace us from behind. And our new course is into parts of space that we didn't study in the briefings."

"I'm not too worried about the briefings, Kryam. We've got computers and star charts for that. The fact that they slowed down as soon as we changed course, that bothers me."

"Almost, Captain, as if they were satisfied with the course we were on."

"Yes, and content to let us run along it."

"A trap, sir?" Kryam's eyebrows shot up on his forehead.

The Communications Officer drew their attention away from the problem. "Incoming communication from the *Darkslayer*, sir."

Kiroth and Kryam exchanged a glance. "On screen," Kiroth barked.

The screen faded from the stars of Tholia to the face of Commodore Korgal. "All ships. I believe we are headed into a

trap of some sort. Be on watch for any signs. Change course to 124 mark 18."

From behind him, Kiroth heard Kryam say, "Too late."

Captain Kiroth looked around at the tactical display. Over the communication lines, he heard Commodore Korgal swear to the memory of a thousand strengthless slaves. Kiroth's spirits sunk lower with every new unfolding of the tactical display.

Appearing on the upper edge, and growing and spreading until it filled the entire screen, Kiroth saw a very elaborate trap. The entire Klingon force was heading straight into a sector of dense asteroids. Passages between the floating debris were few. Worse, most of these were blocked by glowing yellow tendrils of energy-bearing fiber: webs. The dense field of space rubble spread out beyond the reach of his tactical sensors, but on the edges, just coming onto the screen, were little blue dots that represented Tholian craft, size unknown, numbers growing, intercept courses. Five of the blue dots were already among the asteroids and webs ahead of them, waiting, reinforcing their spider's strands.

Korgal's resonant voice boomed out of the speakers. "All ships. This is Korgal. You see the trap before us. To turn will only take us deeper into Tholian space, with the entire pack of them on our heels. On the other side of this trap is open space, where we may escape. Our only chance is to make our way through the trap." His voice rose. "Kail! Into the jaws of death! Victory to the Empire. Victory to the Fleet."

He waited a moment for the adrenaline to settle down, then snapped orders. "*Widowmaker*, we are dropping the capture. Attach a tractor and take it. Head through on the most expedient route you can find. I prefer asteroids to webs. *Scorn*, go with *Widowmaker* and provide the capture all the ECM you can. All other ships, prepare to form a defensive shield for the *Widowmaker* and the captured ship. Avoid contact with the webs. One of the ships is a freighter. It should represent the least problem, so move toward it. Execute!"

Kiroth cast a worried glance over his shoulder at Kryam. This was going to be a tough ride for the young officer. His first trip to the Exec's position shouldn't be this. And Kiroth needed someone he could trust for that job. For a moment, he considered transporting Krill back aboard and putting Kasomia in command of the captured ship.

Just as Kiroth considered this, Kryam looked up and snapped a smart report. "Two of the near ships ahead of us are PC class. The other seems to be a Federation freighter."

"A Federation ship? I wasn't aware that the Tholians had allowed the Federation to come into their borders."

"I don't think they have, sir. Sensors report only Tholian life forms on the freighter. The configuration has been changed somewhat as well, but I can't tell why."

"What about the incoming ships?"

"Incoming ships range in size from patrol craft to the C-class cruiser. Some destroyer-class vessels in the mix. Contact with incoming ships, one to ten minutes. All of our systems are functioning properly." Kryam had a look that spoke of confidence, and Kiroth decided to trust that look. His own worried expression vanished. For some reason he did not understand, he welcomed this trap. Perhaps it would be the end of his dreams, or the end of his life.

"Helm, move to interdict. Stay with the *Darkslayer*. Weaponer, load disruptors. All excess and reserve power to the forward shield. Prepare to contact the asteroids. Helm, let's not let that contact be too severe. Understood?"

"Yes, sir."

"All hands, execute!"



★ Bridge, Tholian Cruiser *Arrakk* ★

Jirrin had given the order to let the attack commence as soon as the Klingons had noticed the trap. With ships coming in from all sides, they had very little choice but to fly through the trap. Any other course would simply lead them deeper into the Holdfast, towards more defensive positions like this one. Now, all he had to do was destroy them before they got out.

The ships at his disposal were a motley variety of patrol craft and destroyers, unused to fighting in fleet engagements. The defense of the Holdfast was not usually a large-scale event. Not since the Klingon invasion of Y92 had there been any fleet-scale activity in the Holdfast, and most of the ship commanders, including Jirrin himself, were more used to fighting individually than as a team. None had ever seen activity on this scale before.

The Klingon force was quite sizable, and heavily gunned. Jirrin would be outgunned in any head-on attack pass. So, the idea is to not allow such a pass. The webs would provide his ships with protection as they sniped and ducked around the Klingon fleet. Still, Jirrin doubted that he had enough firepower to destroy the Klingons.

Be that as it may, Jirrin was sworn to do what he could. "Communication Worker, tie my communication line in to all other ships. Rig it to a switch on my console. I may want to send messages across at any time. Use code four."

"Connecting, Commander. Code four scrambler/descramblers in operation."

"Very good." He activated the switch. "All ships, engage. Remember, our purpose is to defend the Holdfast. The captured ship must not fall into enemy hands. Detain and slow the Klingons until sufficient ships arrive to mount an attack in force. Maintain webs until the Klingons pass, then follow and slow them. Relay questions and coordinate attacks through this ship. *Arrakk* out." Jirrin touched another control. "Pilot Worker, reduce speed to warp two. I want to be able to take a long look at things. When and if we get into combat, Worker Prime Graif will command the ship while I command the fleet. Graif."

The first officer stood and turned to the Commander. His voice was slightly too high even for his usual screech. His internal color was beginning to shade from mauve to bluish-gray. "Sir?"

"I have confidence in you, Graif."

"I understand, sir. I will not let you down."

Jirrin nodded and prayed to the gods that ruled the stars that Graif would keep that word. The coming battle was something totally outside his experience.

"I will be using the main Bridge as a Fleet Command Center," Jirrin said to Graif. "You will command *Arrakk* from the Emergency Bridge. Go there now. Inform the crew there of our plans."

"Yes, Commander."

★ Bridge, Tholian Patrol Corvette *Solitude* ★

The recently-created temporary Sensor Tech Kij stared into the scope of the Tholian sensor array. His hands gradually grew accustomed to the strange controls, and his speed increased accordingly. In a quiet, almost scared voice, he relayed the information to the captured ship's Exec. Lt. Kasomia leaned over Kij's shoulder and listened to the running reports, passing along information as it came in.

"So," Krill said. "We have run into a trap. With no weapons to speak of, we will be in a very untenable position. We have nothing with which to defend ourselves, and we will be the most popular target. Suggestions, Kasomia?"

The old officer stared thoughtfully off into space, literally, by regarding the circular sensor array. "Perhaps, if we could fathom the reason that Tholian ships pass through web, we could speed the fleet's exit."

Krill shook his head. "Neither I nor you nor anyone on this ship has the skill to puzzle that out in time."

Kij looked up from his console. "Uh," he hesitated.

Kasomia looked over at him. "Speak, Kij."

"You are looking for a tactical advantage. Perhaps we could pick up and translate the Tholian communications."

"I'm not sure," Krill said. "We would have to figure out the computer, then the communications console, then try and find the codes, hope we can get access, then have the verbal orders printed so that you could read them. A lot to do."

Kij hung his head. "My apologies, sir."

"A good suggestion," Krill said. "Unfortunately, fate has not granted us time to follow up on it. Kasomia, anything?"

The Exec shrugged and bared his teeth. "Notification of our next of kin? It seems you were right, Krill. Our duty is to die in battle."

Krill sighed. "It's not that I mind dying, but sitting here waiting for it is too much. It doesn't qualify as battle."

"But we took the ship, Krill. Remember the glory of that."

"I shall," Krill said. "For the rest of my life, no doubt," he added, glancing significantly at his wrist chronometer. To his surprise, he noticed that scarcely an hour had passed since the *Vandal* had contacted the enemy. So much living packed into so little time. And now, time only to die.

★ Bridge, Klingon Frigate *Vandal* ★

The fleet passed into a cluster of asteroids, avoiding the web that blocked passage around the damaging rocks. The D6 *Abomination* led the pack, absorbing slight shield damage to protect the other ships of the fleet, firing into the asteroids to clear itself a path. The frigates followed, like silvery birds in flight. Then came the *Darkslayer*, her deadly weapons poised to protect the troop transport, the scout, and the captured ship that brought up the rear.

*Abomination* had taken light shield damage when it emerged from the rocks and spotted the two Tholian PCs moving through a farther web, coming to the attack. Before the command came to fire, however, the two PCs fired their eight forward phasers at the D6, then disappeared back behind their webs. Suddenly, the lead ship was missing half its forward screen.

Kiroth kept one ear to the fleet command channel. Commodore Korgal had warned the *Abomination* to be careful in scanning for the enemy. The two destroyers would no doubt attempt the same tactic. Once *Abomination's* forward shield was down, the *Darkslayer* would be forced to take the forward position. If more ships lost their screens, the fleet would be forced to slow, allowing more Tholian ships to get into attack range.

And just beyond the edge of the asteroids: open space. It was enough to make a Klingon shout in rage and frustration.

Kryam was looking intently at the scanners. "Anything new," Kiroth asked.

"Incoming message from the *Darkslayer*, relayed from the *Scorn*."

"On screen."

Karvic, the captain of the scout vessel, appeared on the screen. Without ado, he began his report. "We have been scanning that Federation freighter. It has some very interesting properties. It has a much higher power output than any freighter I've ever seen, as though the entire cargo hold were given over to power-producing systems. It has modified web generators

capable of maintaining and reinforcing web. Everywhere it goes, the web strength increases."

The screen split to superimpose Korgal's image over Karvic's. "Gather all the information you can on it. All ships, avoid places where the ship has been. We don't want to be caught in web that it has reinforced, nor in web anywhere that this ship can reach. New course 254.9. Korgal out."

The screen faded back into the tactical display. As he thought, the new course was away from the freighter, but closer to the two destroyers. As Kiroth watched, another blinking blue dot appeared. "Kryam?"

The temporary Exec answered. "Tholian C class cruiser, Captain. Closing at warp two point seven."

"Damn. Another couple of ships, and they'll have enough for a pitched battle. They'll come at us in force. We've got to get out of here fast."

"I agree," said Kryam. "But our only option is to go crashing through the asteroids at high warp speeds. Our shields will be shredded."

"I know," the captain said. "And if the enemy does get enough to come at us, we'll need our shields. Korgal is right. Steady movement will eventually prevail. Continue at present speed."

## ★ Bridge, Tholian Patrol Corvette *Solitude* ★

Lt. Kasomia turned to his captain of the moment. Krill sat in the captain's chair, waiting, it seemed, for eternity. "Captain," the Exec said.

Krill glanced over at him. "Captain?"

"Yes, sir. You were placed in command of this ship, Captain. We await your orders." Kasomia had noticed a growing mood in Krill. He seemed less active since he decided that he had nothing to do. Almost as though he was content to wait for the destruction of his first command. Almost as though he had shared Captain Kiroth's idea of death. Kasomia did what any good first officer would do. He tried to snap him out of it.

"Captain," Krill repeated, thoughtfully. "Captain Krill." His face twisted into a sardonic smile. "It sounds good, doesn't it?"

"Yes, Captain, it does." The old officer returned the smile.

"Well, then, Executive Officer Kasomia, any new information?"

"Another ship, Captain. Kij identified it as a C-class cruiser, on intercept course, warp two point seven."

"What do you think they plan?"

Kasomia shrugged. "As you know, Krill, I was never a brilliant tactician. I fear to venture a guess."

"I suspected, Kasomia, but I never knew. And why fear? You may be right, you may be wrong, but still, you must act."

"No, Captain. It is you who must act." Kasomia warned. "As for myself, I tried to out-think my opponents when I was younger. Brash, headstrong, even reckless. And I did well. I was on the fast track. I was a hot item. Everyone thought I was a cinch to make captain in less than eight years. Until one day on duty as Executive Officer of the D6 *Carnage*, I advised my captain on a tactic to out-think a Hydran commander. It failed."

"Such things may fail, Kasomia. Why does it affect you so deeply?"

"It failed," Kasomia answered hollowly. "And the Hydran fleet was free to pass through Klingon lines. They attacked several planets, including my own." Kasomia looked even older than usual as he stared not at the screen, but beyond it. "My entire family was destroyed, except for me. Simply because I took a chance and was wrong." Laughing a grim laugh, he continued. "The captain of the *Carnage* threw the blame for the entire operation on my head, and the bridge playback supported him. Then, the Imperial Council disowned me from my family

posthumously, demoted me to sweeping decks, and then to a dull base job. I had been there for eleven years." He shook his head sadly. "Unfortunate. My father had just been appointed Imperial Governor of the planet. They had all just arrived from Klinshai." Now, Kasomia stared off into space, lost in his own thoughts.

Krill saw how Kasomia had brought him back to himself. Now, perhaps, he could do the same. "Think now, Kasomia. What will these sand-castle copies of sentient beings do? Think!"

Kasomia sat motionless for a second. Then he spoke as though his voice came across time, from eleven years away. "The fleet is leaving. They will let it go. They don't have the combat power for a decisive engagement. They seek only to defend, not to destroy us in detail. But they will destroy this ship. They must. That is their goal. Once we are scrap, they will withdraw. They will not risk ships against us. They will not risk another capture. And without surprise, another capture is impossible."

Krill smiled. "Very good. Why will they not crush us? We are in a trap."

"They will not risk themselves. They have too few ships in their fleets. They cannot afford to be extravagant with them, sacrificing them for a temporary goal or advantage, as the Empire can."

"True." Krill grasped his helmet and scratched his head against the inside in a vain attempt to reach an annoying itch. "In that case, we must be ready. Is there anything of value we can learn by remaining on this hulk?"

"Not really. We don't have time to learn much more."

"But we must stay on board to provide power. Our movement speeds the fleet by just so much." Krill nodded. "I shall act." He touched the ship-wide intercom switch. "All hands. All departments. Prepare to abandon ship. All repair, research, and weapons teams report to transporter locations for immediate beam-out. All engineering departments. Personnel essential to warp movement shall remain aboard. All other personnel prepare to beam out. Captain out. Kasomia, contact the *Darkslayer* and let me run this plan by the Admiral."

Kasomia looked up at him. "Saving lives, Captain? What about our duty to die?"

"Death in battle, Exec. Not suicide. Helmsman, show me how this board works. Then get out of here. Kasomia, I'll need you and Kij here, everyone else, out. Call the *Widowmaker* and tell them to prepare to transport the non-essential crew and the prisoners out of here. Then, respectfully request that they keep a couple of transporters ready for the rest of us in case of the inevitable. Shut down life support. If the Tholians decide to board it, they'll have to wear vacuum suits just like us."

"Yes, sir." Kasomia grinned, and for the first time in eleven years, riding on the edge of death, he felt good. He was a Klingon again.

## ★ Bridge, Klingon Command Cruiser *Darkslayer* ★

Two Tholian destroyers popped through the web in front of the *Abomination*, but this time, the fleet was ready. The sturdy D6 lost the rest of its forward shield, but the Tholian Holdfast lost the use of one of its few destroyers. Massed disruptor fire from the fleet pounded the shields of the tiny ship and left gaping holes in the dorsal hull. Electrical power arced from severed conduits and shone brightly against the blackness of space. The other destroyer tractor-dredged his injured companion, and they both vanished through the energy wall of the web.

Korgal called out for the *Abomination* to fall back, and the *Darkslayer* sped up a fraction of a warp factor and pulled ahead of the frigates just as the fleet dove into another cluster of

asteroids. Careful phaser fire carved a safe path for the trailing members of the fleet.

Korgal was worried. Acting Captain Krill had just begun his evacuation of the captured ship, leaving himself with nothing but a skeleton crew and four boarding parties. It made sense to save the crew, but it made the captured ship dangerously defenseless.

Then again, the ship was totally defenseless anyway. This act just confirmed the reality of the situation. Korgal knew his chances of getting the Tholian hulk out of here were very thin, and getting thinner every second. He wanted to sigh deeply and shake his head, but that would have been the act of a weaker man. As fleet commander, Korgal had to radiate strength and confidence.

He did.

#### ★ Bridge, Tholian Cruiser *Arrakk* ★

Captain Jirrin got the report on the damaged *Triax*. The ship would be out of action for several weeks, at least. However, the damage to the D6 would slow their progress for a moment while the other cruiser moved up to take its position.

It had been so long since Jirrin had commanded more than one ship; he was unused to the situation. Fleet tactics were coming only slowly back to mind. But the crippling of the *Triax* reminded him that he had better move. If the Klingons knocked out one ship with each punch, it would not be long before the Tholians ran out of ships. The battle needed ships that could not be destroyed in one shot. It needed the *Arrakk*.

"*Arrakk*, maximum warp to the combat zone. Rendezvous with ships in the area. We shall present a united assault at the earliest possible moment."

"Yes, Commander Jirrin," came Worker Prime Graif's response.

Jirrin felt the warp engines begin to hum as the ship picked up speed. The *Arrakk* might be the ship to swing the tide of the battle. Jirrin only hoped it would be enough.

#### ★ Bridge, Tholian Patrol Corvette *Solitude* ★

"*Widowmaker* reports transport complete, Captain."

Krill looked up from the helm. "Very good, Kasomia." Krill had turned back to the helm when Tech Kij sat bolt upright.

"What is it Kij?" Kasomia asked.

"Two ships, Sir. A PC and a destroyer coming in behind us at high warp speeds."

"Good thing we transported when we did," Krill said. "With the enemy behind us now, the *Widowmaker* would have been unable to drop shields to transport. Good thinking, Exec."

"And a timely action," Kasomia said.

"But enough praise. The question is, how do we survive?"

Before Kasomia could respond, Korgal answered. The Commodore's booming voice spoke out through the open communicator on the helm console. "*Vandal*, *Blackstar*. Drop back and defend the fleet. Keep those ships away from the *Widowmaker*."

"Understood, Commodore," Kiroth's voice quickly responded. He was echoed by Korq, answering for the *Blackstar*. On the circular starscape above him, Krill saw the computer-generated images of the *Vandal* and the *Blackstar* turn to starboard and start rounding an asteroid cluster. Their course would take them through a narrow pass, through some asteroids, and then into contact with the new arrivals.

"Captain Kiroth sounded pleased," Kij said.

"Why shouldn't he be?" Krill asked. "Commodore Korgal just honored him."

"Honored him?"

"Yes, two ways. First, he gave Kiroth an independent assignment, apart from the main action of the fleet. This shows confidence in his abilities. Second, he placed Kiroth in command of the two-ship task force."

"How? I heard no such command."

"When two ships are of equal size and their commanders of equal rank, as is the case here, the captain of the ship named first in the orders commands the task force. It is an old tradition, dating back many years."

Kasomia nodded. "It began before subspace communications were developed. Messages took so long to transmit, any words that could be cut out were deleted. It saved time. Now, it is a tradition."

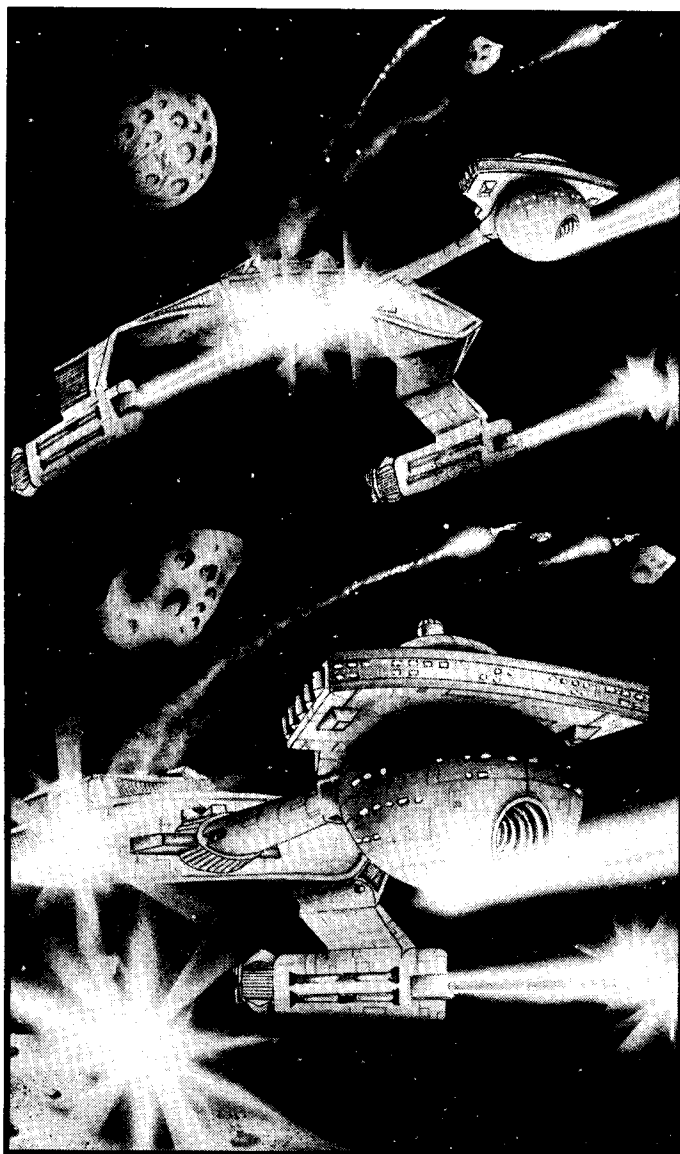
Kij adjusted his sensors. "I never heard that before."

"It is only known among those in the line of command, usually," Krill said. "It is no secret, but it is not widespread. Korgal probably gave Kiroth the assignment as a reward for a clean capture."

Kij added a new log to the fire. "Another ship, sir. C-class cruiser, closing with the other Tholian ships."

Krill looked over at Kasomia, who had taken the navigator's position. The lieutenant nodded. "They're coming."

"Formation attack?"





"Most likely. They've got two cruisers, two PCs, and a destroyer. With *Vandal* and *Blackstar* on rear guard, that leaves us two cruisers and a frigate, plus anything we can get from the *Widowmaker* and the scout. It's enough." He paused and reflected on the information at hand. "Two cruisers. We've never seen two cruisers in one place before. Either this is the strangest of coincidences, they've got a lot more cruisers than we suspect, or they must have known we were coming."

"More than just a coincidence, Kasomia," Krill said. "They may have known our plans all along. At least we now know that they have at least two cruisers."

"So much the worse for us," Kasomia sighed.

★ Bridge, Klingon Frigate *Vandal* ★

Captain Kiroth had seen the new cruiser's arrival, making the same decisions about its intent that Kasomia had made. He opened a line directly to the *Blackstar*. "*Blackstar*, this is *Vandal*," he said.

"This is *Blackstar*. What is it, Kiroth?"

"Attack strategy, Korq. You see the new cruiser?"

"Of course we see it." Korq's voice radiated barely controlled contempt. Kiroth was not surprised. Korq should have outranked him and commanded this attack, but Korgal had given it to Kiroth. Korq was bound to be on edge about it.

"Well, Korq," Kiroth said, "The Tholians have enough power to attack the fleet. We must return as soon as possible. Increase speed to warp two point four. Follow me through the asteroids. As soon as our targets are slowed, we shall break off and return to the fleet."

"Aye, Captain. Which is our first target?"

Kiroth grimaced at Korq's tone. "I would prefer the destroyer, but they'll probably send the PC out in front. Take whichever is closest."

"Wonderful tactical advice. *Blackstar* out."

"*Vandal* out." Kiroth spun his chair again. "Helm, time to asteroids?"

"Entering cluster in sixteen seconds, sir."

"Keep alert."

"Yes, sir."

"Anything else on the scanners?"

"No new ships at this time. The new cruiser has rendezvoused with the other Tholian ships."

No surprise, Kiroth thought. As he watched the tactical display, the Tholian PC moved out ahead of the destroyer. "As I thought."

Suddenly, he had no time to think. The *Vandal* entered the asteroids, and for the next few seconds, he concentrated on holding on to his chair. The ship lurched wildly from side to side, internal gravity compensators struggling to keep up with the ship's violent motions. On the viewscreen, huge chunks of red and brown rock rushed toward the *Vandal*, filling the screen, then passing harmlessly off to the side. The view of moving at warp two point four, almost fourteen times the speed of light, through these narrow passages was stomach-wrenching.

Then, as suddenly as it had begun, it was over. "Asteroids cleared, Captain. No damage."

"Good piloting, Helm." He again studied the tactical display. The Tholian ships had retreated behind a web, attempting to avoid the Klingon onslaught. However, they had to come out sometime soon if they wanted any chance at all to get to the captured PC. Unfortunately, Kiroth didn't have time to wait.

"*Blackstar*, we're going to point-blank on that PC. I want it stopped. Stay close so we can support one another. I want to kill it with phasers and drones. All ten phasers followed by two drones. Save the disruptors. Understand?"

"Understood, *Vandal*." *Blackstar*'s image slowly gained on the *Vandal* in the tactical display until the two were practically on top of one another. As Kiroth watched, the two enemy ships turned to circle a cluster of asteroids, coming back to the attack. *Vandal* and *Blackstar* leaped down upon them through a relatively clear corridor between two masses of floating rubble. The PC in the lead saw them coming and held his fire.

Kiroth watched and saw that the Tholians had made a mistake by splitting their ships. They could no longer get both ships' weapons on a single shield. He glanced up from the tactical display and regarded the viewport. The operator was constantly stepping down the magnification as the ships rushed across the open space. Just like the Orion.

"Range, fifty thousand, forty, thirty, twenty..."

Just like the Orion.

"Hard to port!," Kiroth shouted. "Launch and fire!"

The *Vandal* and the *Blackstar* wheeled to the left, bearing down on the destroyer. They launched a drone each and fired all phasers as they turned. The combined firepower of the two ship's phaser batteries tore down the #2 shield of the Tholian craft and bit deep into the ship's internals. The PC responded with two phasers at the *Vandal*, which heavily damaged *Vandal*'s forward flank shield. But the other two phasers fired at the drones, destroying them.

Kiroth was caught in a maelstrom of shifting images as the Tholian became an Orion became a huge serpent come to devour him. But a voice in the back of his mind called him. He had a job to do.

"Captain," Kryam said.

Kiroth pulled his eyes back into focus on the tactical display. Mentally, he fought the serpent that haunted his dreams, gripped it, consumed it.

Conquered it.

"Damage report!" Kiroth snapped.

"Number two shield weakened, but holding. No internal damage." Kryam's voice was steady and mechanical. "Enemy ship has sustained major damage. It is no longer capable of catching the *Widowmaker*."

"Perfect," Kiroth said. "Another ship out of the game, and we are still unhurt. Helm, close with that destroyer."

On the viewscreen, the destroyer grew rapidly. "Will our phasers cycle before we reach point-blank range?"

At that moment, the *Vandal* was rocked by a blow to her chin. The destroyer had fired at long range, hoping to get out without suffering its companion's fate. "Damage?"

"Forward shield is down, Captain. Minor hull damage."

"Bearing?"

"Enemy ship has turned. Attempting to evade." On the tactical display, Kiroth could see the destroyer making a run for a nearby strand of web. "If he gets behind that web, sir, we won't be able to catch him."

"He's not moving very fast. Let's see if we can catch him. *Blackstar*, full speed. We'll give this one a chase."

"Understood," Korq's voice responded over the subspace.

"Captain."

"Yes, Kryam?"

"How close did you want to get?"

"Point-blank."

"He'll make it through the web just as we get to ten thousand."

Kiroth looked over his options. He couldn't believe that this one would get away. His dream faded away as he thought furiously about how to get this Tholian.

★ Flag Bridge, Klingon Command Cruiser *Darkslayer* ★

Commodore Korgal had seen *Vandal* and *Blackstar* go charging off to destroy the new arrivals, but then he had lost them. He was concentrating more on the scene unfolding before him. The newly arrived Tholian cruiser had joined formation with the other cruiser, the destroyer, and the two patrol craft. As a combined force, they began to close with the Klingons, but always on the other side of a strand of web, making the Klingon weapons useless.

"Maintain range seventy thousand to the webs. Keep moving toward open space. Warp two point three."

Korgal looked at the odds. He had two cruisers, a frigate, a troop transport, and a scout. Not enough. Should he recall *Vandal* and *Blackstar*? No, they were already committed, and to recall them would leave the captured ship vulnerable to damage from behind. Nothing to do but forge through it and hope for the best.

"Any more incoming ships?"

"We have several on long-range scans, closing."

No time to turn and rejoin his force, then. Korgal crossed his arms in front of his massive chest and waited, patient, knowing that the Tholians would come. He suddenly realized that they would come soon. They could not afford to wait much longer.

"Overload disruptors."

"Yes, sir."

★ Bridge, Tholian Cruiser *Arrakk* ★

Aboard the *Arrakk*, Jirrin had worked out the best plan he could devise. The Klingons were not going to alter course now, with safety so close. But they were also not putting the captured ship in a position where it could be attacked. The cruiser that towed it kept up a stately progress toward the border while the cruisers and the frigate danced around it, always between the transport and the Tholians. To destroy the *Solitude*, Jirrin would have to go through the other ships.

Well, he now had the firepower to do it. "All ships. This is Jirrin. We commence attack at once. Prepare for a warp turn. We shall pass through the webs just enough to clear our weapons, then fire and retreat using the warp turn. Our target is the D6. It is the closest and has the weaker shields. Slowing it will slow the fleet. Any questions?"

The commander of the *Akkrev* responded. "Sir, a warp turn has never been attempted with a C-class cruiser. We don't know its chance of failure."

"We shall do it anyway."

"Sir, computer simulations show that there may be some risk due to the weakness of the welded design."

Jirrin considered it, but he was willing to bet on the Tholian engineers. "It's a good thought, but I think it best to attempt the turn than to allow the Klingons to escape with the *Solitude*. Risk it."

"Yes, Commander."

"Good. Any more questions?"

There were none. A line of orange lights on his console showed that all ships signalled ready. He toggled his communications switch again. "All ships are prepared. Attack."

His chair rocked slightly back as the *Arrakk* increased speed and headed toward the line of web that shielded the Tholians from the Klingon weapons.

★ Flag Bridge, Klingon Command Cruiser *Darkslayer* ★

"Commodore, they have increased speed."

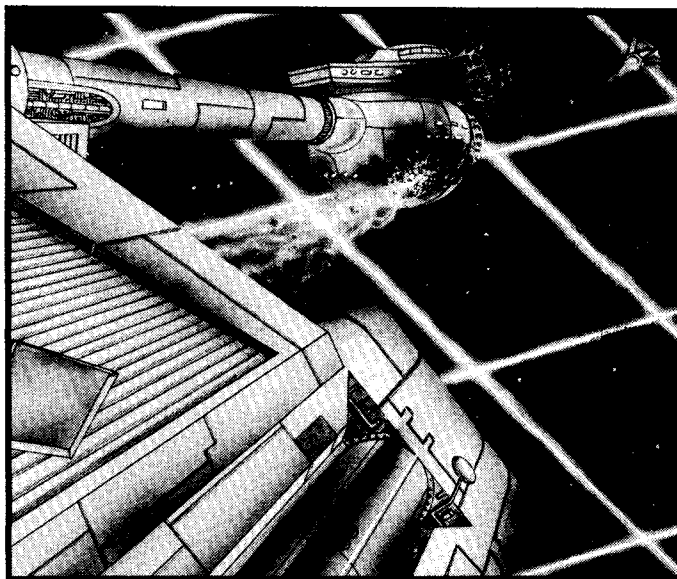
Korgal glanced up at the tactical display. He saw the dots of the Tholian ships shooting towards the web. "Good," he said. "We shall have a little surprise for them. Attack ships, turn to intercept. As soon as the leading cruiser pokes his nose out of the web, shoot it off. All weapons on the lead cruiser. They have very few of those, and each one we destroy is a significant loss to the Holdfast."

"Yes, Commodore."

★ Bridge, Tholian Cruiser *Arrakk* ★

The *Arrakk* flew towards the intervening web, weapons at the ready, slightly behind the other ships in his task force. As the task force leader, it was part of Jirrin's duty to see to his own survival. Since he was the most experienced officer in the area, his training and leadership were more essential than his phasers and disruptors.

Thus, it was *Akkrev* that first crossed the line of energy that separated the Tholians from the Klingons. Jirrin watched as blue disruptor fire and white-hot phaser blasts hurled across the void separating the two fleets. The *Abomination* was thrown back, slowing in its progress across the cosmos, stopping to rest before continuing.



The *Akkrev* also reeled from the pounding it received at the hands of the Klingon fleet. But the heavy internal damage was further compounded by what happened next. Following the plan, the ship began its high energy maneuver to return to the safety of the other side of the web, but the damage it had taken was too severe. Guidance systems failed as the *Akkrev* tried to reverse its velocity. Thruster compensation also chose that moment to break down, and the *Akkrev* continued on its course, velocity unchanged, spinning madly as it tried to regain control of itself.

## ★ Flag Bridge, Klingon Command Cruiser *Darkslayer* ★

On board the *Darkslayer*, Korgal shouted, "Hard to port! All ships launch drones at the cruiser. Now!" He watched the tactical display as the other Tholian cruiser popped through the web, firing to no effect as the Klingon ships turned fresh shields to the enemy.

"Message from *Abomination*, Commodore."

"On audio," Korgal said. "Speak, Captain."

"No, sir," a desperate-sounding voice replied. "Our Captain and Exec are dead. This is Senior Watch Officer Kriwal."

"Steady down, Kriwal. Report."

"Yes, sir. Warp drives are at half capacity. We have lost our starboard waist phasers, one bow phaser, and one disruptor. Both drone racks were destroyed in a chain reaction. Major hull damage, and our Impulse deck is gone. We cannot maintain the pace, Commodore."

"We cannot afford to wait, Kriwal," Korgal replied, the tone in his voice more definite than any words.

"Understood, Commodore. We shall delay them as we can, then try to break contact. If we cannot, we shall avoid capture."

"Very good, Kriwal. May the gods watch the battle and find you worthy."

"And you, Commodore. *Abomination* out."

Korgal turned back to the tactical display. The Tholians had turned to make some distance, but they would be back. Looking through the display, he could almost see the route that they would take. And what would they do then? The *Widowmaker* was closing for open space, and soon the Tholians would have to make a run at the captured ship. But when? And how could it be prevented?

Aft of the *Darkslayer*, the *Akkrev* slowed and stopped, allowing the drones to catch it. On Korgal's tactical display, one enemy marker faded and then was gone. Korgal allowed a brief celebration at the ship's death, then it was back to work.

## ★ Bridge, Klingon Frigate *Vandal* ★

Kiroth watched as the fleeing Tholian destroyer headed for the web and safety. *Vandal* and *Blackstar*, like great birds of prey, winged down on the three-finned ship, but the mathematical odds held them. No power in the Universe could change the fundamental laws by which the Universe itself were constructed. By those laws, *Vandal* would fail.

But *Vandal* couldn't fail. The Tholian fleet was already approaching the *Darkslayer*, and beyond that, the *Widowmaker* and her fragile companion. For a second, Kiroth wished for Krill's aggressive influence. Perhaps his attack instincts would show something that Kiroth didn't see.

And then, he saw it.

"Kryam, how much will that web slow us?"

The temporary Exec studied his readouts. "Not completely, but significantly. We run no risk of breakdown when entering it, but it will hold us for a while."

"No breakdown, though?"

"No, sir."

Kiroth opened a channel and outlined his plan to Captain Korq. The *Blackstar's* commander responded with a hearty laugh. Kiroth felt that with the plan he had gained a measure of Korq's respect. "A good plan, Kiroth. Especially in that if it doesn't work, we won't be around to take the blame for it."

"You approve, then?"

"I was ordered to follow your orders, Kiroth," Korq responded haughtily. "But if it makes any difference to you... yes, I like it."

"Well then, execute."

"Executing. *Blackstar* out."

Kiroth glanced at the tactical display and saw the Tholian just entering the web. "Now," he shouted. "Emergency Stop! Overload disruptors, hold reserve energy for later movement. All remaining power to the tractor beam." The *Vandal* applied reverse thrusters and came to a complete standstill just inside the web. The Tholian ship was just before him.

"Range?"

"Ten thousand."

"Attach tractor beam to the enemy."

"They are not fighting it, Captain. Beam established."

*Blackstar* had also entered the web, moving at full speed, no disruptors armed. In seconds, *Blackstar* had broken through the web.

Just then, the Tholian ship spun on its axis to face the Klingons and fired a full barrage into the *Vandal's* #6 shield.

"Damage report!"

"Number six shield down, Captain. Minor hull damage only."

"That's all?"

"Yes, sir. They were too close to fire their disruptors. They were not overloaded." Kryam flashed a smile at the captain. "I don't think they expected that combat would be this close."

Kiroth looked up, almost incredulously. "It worked," Kiroth breathed. "Even better than I had thought." He quickly recovered himself. "Release tractor. Launch drone."

"Drone away."

"Increase speed to warp two."

"Increasing speed."

At that moment, *Blackstar's* image on the tactical display merged with the Tholian's.

On the screen, Kiroth saw the *Blackstar* cut loose with his forward phasers to dent the destroyer's screens, but the big bang came from the drone, launched almost in the Tholian's face, which tore a hole in the shield.

Then, by the laws of physics that had denied Kiroth before, the enemy ship moved directly towards the *Vandal*. The *Vandal's* drone, though not yet clear of the web, still found its target and placed another hole in the destroyer's shield, then the hull.

This was followed by two overloaded blue bolts of disruptor fire and a full spread of five phaser-2s. And though the Tholian ship remained intact, it floated, powerless, into empty space.

Just then, a shudder ran through the ship.

"What was that?"

From the audio speakers came the answer. "This is Korq. I couldn't let you just die after that plan. We're pulling you out of that web. Then, let's get out of here. I think Korgal needs us."

"Understood," Kiroth laughed. "And Captain."

"Yes?"

"My thanks."

## ★ Bridge, Tholian Cruiser *Arrakk* ★

Jirrin sat on the Bridge of his ship, fuming at himself. He had forced the *Akkrev* to make the maneuver that destroyed her, against her own commander's will. The entire Holdfast would pay the price of that decision. *Akkrev* and *Arrakk* were the only two ships of the class, and now, *Akkrev* was gone. And the *Attrex* would not be ready for four months. His attack had not even achieved its purpose. The Klingons flew onward, leaving the crippled cruiser behind. They had not slowed at all.

Jirrin saw that his last chance was coming up. The Klingon troop transport was getting dangerously close to a clear run for freedom. His defense of the Holdfast, his trap, the painful loss of the *Akkrev*, all his careful planning, would come to nothing if the Klingons got the *Solitude* home. He gave his orders and the ships under his command responded.



★ Bridge, Tholian Patrol Corvette *Solitude* ★

Krill studied the heavens displayed about him on the Tholian sensor array. Quickly, he glanced back at the navigation controls he was manning. Beside him, Kasomia stared grimly at the approaching edge of the asteroid field and the image of the Tholian ships approaching to starboard.

"Captain."

"Yes, Kas?" Krill had heard the old lieutenant referred to by the nickname on board the ship. A faint smile flickered across his face when Krill used the name. It seemed to calm him, somehow.

He replied. "This will be their last chance. They dare not miss it."

"I know. Inform the *Widowmaker* that we'll be coming aboard soon. Have them power the transporters and lock on to us in preparation for an emergency beam-out."

"I will. A terrible way to end your first command, Captain."

"Perhaps," Krill said. "But then, the fact that we are here at all speaks highly of us. And there are many, like yourself, who see years of service yet never see a command of their own. I feel no shame at the passing of this one."

"You know, Krill, I almost think you're gaining some wisdom."

"And you, Kas, are regaining some youth."

"True," he replied. "I haven't felt so good in years. I'll contact the *Widowmaker*."

"One more thing. If ever I should get another command, I'll want you for my Exec."

Kasomia looked surprised. "I am honored. But me? Whatever for?"

"Your guesses, of course."

★ Bridge, Tholian Cruiser *Arrakk* ★

*Arrakk* swung around the end of an asteroid cluster, the destroyer *Division* on his wing, two patrol craft flanking them, one with the phaser refit.

This time, there were no webs, no high energy turns, no finesse. Straight and simple, they were going to roll over the *Darkslayer* and the *Khedive* and get to the *Solitude*. With four ships to two, one of the craft was bound to get through. Transporter activity showed that some Tholians may have been taken aboard the troop transport, but they could not give away the secret of the webs.

Only with the device itself could the Klingons puzzle it out, and even then, it may do them no good.

★ Flag Bridge, Klingon Command Cruiser *Darkslayer* ★

Korgal passed out his orders...kill the destroyer and drone the rest. Wear down their offense by forcing them to use weapons defensively. Don't leave them enough to fire at the captured ship. His own ship prepared to launch a scatter-pack.

He only hoped he had enough.

★ Bridge, Tholian Cruiser *Arrakk* ★

Jirrin gave the order for the attack to proceed. His pack of hungry ships sped up as they rounded the asteroids. As they did, Jirrin noticed three new blips on the screen. "Drones and a shuttle," he muttered.

Time for the old Cascade defense. He opened a channel to one PC. "*Steady*, take care of the three drones incoming, fire at the shuttle, then turn and fall back. I want you out of there."

"Aye." As the drones approached, the tiny ship destroyed them with a single phaser blast each. Then, its remaining

phaser lashed out at the Klingon shuttle. A phaser from the DD *Division* finished it. It exploded with the indicative brilliance of a scatter-pack. Then, the PC *Steady* turned back toward Tholian space, dodging asteroids as it went.

Jirrin, without flinching, led his remaining ships right into the teeth of the oncoming Klingons. Without a second's thought of return fire, he commanded the pilot workers of the three vessels to ignore any ship but the captured *Solitude*.

As a result, the overloaded Klingon disruptors and phasers crippled the *Division* with one stroke, but the ship coasted on, one disruptor still operational.

The other patrol corvette was locked in a tractor beam, and the *Arrakk* was grabbed for by the Klingon cruiser, but missed.

Finally through the wall of the Klingons, his target loomed before him. Another drone rose from the Klingon scout and turned toward him. Still, Jirrin commanded that no firing should begin. Slowly, the drone closed.

Jirrin looked at the targeting scanners. The *Solitude* was being heavily defended with electronic countermeasures. Jirrin threw all the power he had into fighting the jamming, but there was no way to get an optimum firing solution on the ship. He would have to settle for what he could get.

With the drone only twenty thousand meters away, Jirrin finally gave the order. "Hold back one phaser. Fire all other weapons!" The bolts shot through empty space, leaving a trail of fire glowing behind them, touching the tractored *Solitude*.

Destroying it.

Were you in there, Vriss? Did I just destroy you, old friend? Or was your life already spent? How many precious lives were lost today? How many would still be lost.

Jirrin commanded that the remaining drone be destroyed. He turned away amid fire from the Klingon scout and troop transport, raking his side shields, but causing only minor damage.

Jirrin made the last decision of the battle: how many more Tholians would die today.

No more.

The Holfast could afford no more losses. He touched the communications switch on his console.

"All ships, pull back. We have achieved our purpose here. The Klingons will now return to their space. Waste no lives in attempting to stop them. Avoid them, but do not let them return to our space."

★ Flag Bridge, Klingon Command Cruiser *Darkslayer* ★

As one, the Tholians pulled away, leaving room for *Vandal* and *Blackstar* to fly through, coming to the rescue of the ailing *Abomination*, tractoring it out of the asteroid cluster, towing it back home. Korgal fumed at not being able to take home the web device, but Tholian ships were coming in too fast for the fleet to try and take one of the crippled ships in the cluster as they went. The captured Tholian ship currently held by the *Khedive* did not have the web device and would simply slow them. Korgal ordered the *Khedive* to fire all weapons on it, then drop it as they departed the asteroid field.

The mission had failed, but it wasn't a total loss. One precious Tholian cruiser and one patrol craft destroyed. Three destroyers and a patrol craft crippled. And Korgal had the added advantage of bringing all his own ships home. That would stop some of the questions arising from his inability to capture a web-equipped ship. Plus, he had over forty Tholian prisoners that could possibly be made to give up the secret of the web.

## ★ Officer's Lounge, Klingon Base Station 18 ★

Back at Base Station 18, Kiroth walked out of the debriefing to be met by Krill, Kasomia, and Kryam. Together, they wandered down to the Officer's Lounge and ordered up a round of ale.

After a few minutes of small talk, Krill asked the question that was on everyone's mind. "Well, Captain. You seem very quiet. Why? Is the *Vandal* to be relegated to police duty? Are we under arrest? What happened?"

Kiroth shook his head. "No, Krill. Nothing like that. The mission failed, and so there are sure to be some questions, and everyone involved is trying to place the blame on someone else, but no one places the blame on us as far as I can tell. You'll be called soon, no doubt, to tell your part of the story. But I commended you on your actions."

"Me? What did I do that deserves commendation?"

Kiroth laughed grimly. "You won. You took the *Solitude* and, with almost nothing, contributed to the battle as best you could, wisely and without unnecessary loss of life. In fact, you surprised me. You acted with moderation and care when I was expecting you to do something daring, flamboyant, and foolish."

Krill stared into his ale with an ashamed look on his face. "Six weeks ago, you would have been right. I was ready to throw away my life and the lives of my crew, just as long as I did it with style." Krill shook his head. "I was wrong."

At that moment, the base intercom rang out. "Commander Krill, report to the Commodore's office."

Krill glanced up. "The Inquisition calls." He stood. "I will return," he said. Then he added, "If I can."

Kasomia and Kryam studied Kiroth's face and decided that he would probably make an excellent klarn player, so unreadable was his expression. "Captain," Kasomia began, "perhaps I should go as well. Maybe I can add something to Krill's report."

Kiroth shook his head. "No, they want to see Krill alone. But, it is good that you show such loyalty. You've changed, Lieutenant, and much for the better, it seems."

"I owe that to Krill, Captain, and to the battle. They...woke me up, you might say. Reminded me that I was a Klingon."

"Good. Krill, too, seems more sure of himself. And that tech you mentioned in your report, Kij. He's was decorated, promoted, and assigned to supervise the interrogation of the Tholian prisoners. Korgal made him part of his personal staff. But the change in Krill is almost as profound as your own."

"Yes," Kasomia said. "He has gained experience and some wisdom. I hope that the cloud of this failure does not overshadow his performance. He did well. He should not be punished for it."

"Kryam," Kiroth said, "did I ever say that Krill was going to be punished?"

The young officer took a long pull from his ale as he considered the question. When he had finished, he dropped the mug back to the table and wiped the foam from his moustache with the back of his hand. "No, Captain. You never said 'punished.' You said 'commended.'"

"Accuracy," Kiroth continued, "is a prime quality in a command-grade officer. Remember that, Kasomia."

"Sir?"

"Forget it," Kiroth replied. "Drink your ale. And don't ask any more questions. The *Vandal* is staying here, at least for the moment. I need to think."

The Captain looked off into space and thought about his own changes. At the moment of truth, he had conquered his own feelings of death. The dreams no longer haunted him. Kiroth reveled in the simple pleasure of just feeling good while his junior officers chased their tails over Krill's fate and the ins

and outs of the battle. They were still thus engaged when Krill walked back in. Catching Kiroth's eye, Krill gave him a quick smile, then threw himself down into a chair and roared for another ale.

"Krill," Kasomia said, "What happened. What did the Commodore do to you?"

"Stinking slug-butt," Krill said. "He assigned me to a hazardous duty where I'm sure to get little sleep, no leave, lots of work, and enough problems to give a blyaaak ulcers. I'd open a vein right now, if the Commodore hadn't specifically ordered me not to."

Kiroth looked at him sadly. "He really did it to you, didn't he?"

"Just like you knew he would."

Krill's ale arrived. "I'll cover this for you," Kiroth said. "Consider it a going away gift. After all, you won't have shipmates to drink with at the Command School."

"True," Krill replied. "I have to buy one for your Exec. Lt. Commander Kasomia, I'm picking up your tab tonight."

Kasomia's jaw was scraping the deck of the lounge. "What?"

"I'm leaving. You've got my old job. You deserve it more than I do anyway. More experience."

"I'm the Exec? And you're going to Command School?"

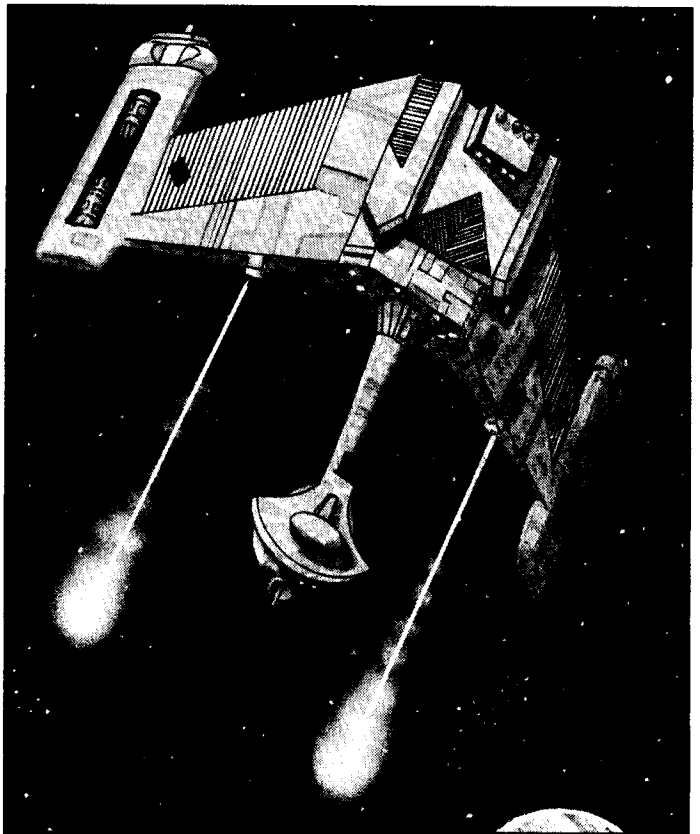
"Yes," Krill said. "It's terrible. Imagine the responsibility of it all, the work ahead. It makes me tired just thinking about it."

Kryam stared back and forth, alternately at Krill, then at Kiroth, with an occasional glance at Kasomia, who still didn't seem to have picked up on the situation. "This is too much," he growled.

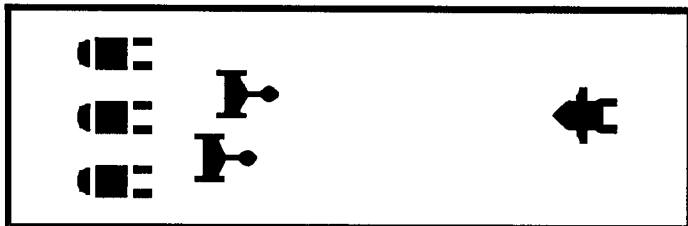
"Kryam," Kiroth said, "a command officer should be quick to recognize a changing tactical situation and adapt to it. Remember that when you're the Senior Watch Officer..." He glanced at the chronometer on the wall, "...in about eight hours."

Kryam spilled his ale.

★★★



# (SL108.0) Orion Roulette



(Y148)

by Jim Hart, North Carolina

In Y148, two E4 frigates were escorting a convoy when they were attacked by an Orion Light Raider.

**(SL108.1) NUMBER OF PLAYERS:** 2; the Klingon player and the Orion player

## (SL108.2) INITIAL SET-UP

**KLINGON:** 3 small freighters in hexes 2115, 2215, and 2316. heading F, speed 4, WS-I.

E4 *Keeper* and E4 *Safeguard* anywhere within 3 hexes of 2215, heading F, speed 4, WS-I.

**ORION:** LR *Mist Demon*, any map edge, any heading, speed 8, WS-II.

**(SL108.3) LENGTH OF SCENARIO:** The scenario continues until all forces belonging to one side have been destroyed, captured, forced to disengage, or until the end of turn 10.

## (SL108.4) SPECIAL RULES

**(SL108.41) MAP:** Use a floating map.

**(SL108.42) SHUTTLES AND PFs:** No shuttles or PFs have warp booster packs.

**(SL108.421)** There are no MRS shuttles in this scenario.

**(SL108.422)** There are no fighters in this scenario.

**(SL108.423)** There are no PFs in this scenario.

## (SL108.43) COMMANDER'S OPTION ITEMS

**(SL108.431)** There are no Commander's Option Items in this scenario.

**(SL108.432)** All drones are "slow;" speed-8. Type-II and type-V drones (speed 12) are available for selection as Restricted Availability drones, e.g. one drone in four.

There are no other special drones in this scenario.

**(SL108.44)** Refits: There are no refits in this scenario.

**(SL108.45)** The Orion may choose optional weapons before the game. Optional weapons need not be revealed until called for by Tactical Intelligence (D17.0). (If not using Tac Intel, weapons must be announced at range 8 to any Klingon ship, including the freighters, which has fully active fire control.) Mount restrictions apply. The following cannot be used: hellbores, special sensor, mine storage, or more than 2 phaser-G.

**(SL108.46)** The Orion cannot disengage by sublight evasion, nor can captured freighters. Uncaptured freighters may attempt this.

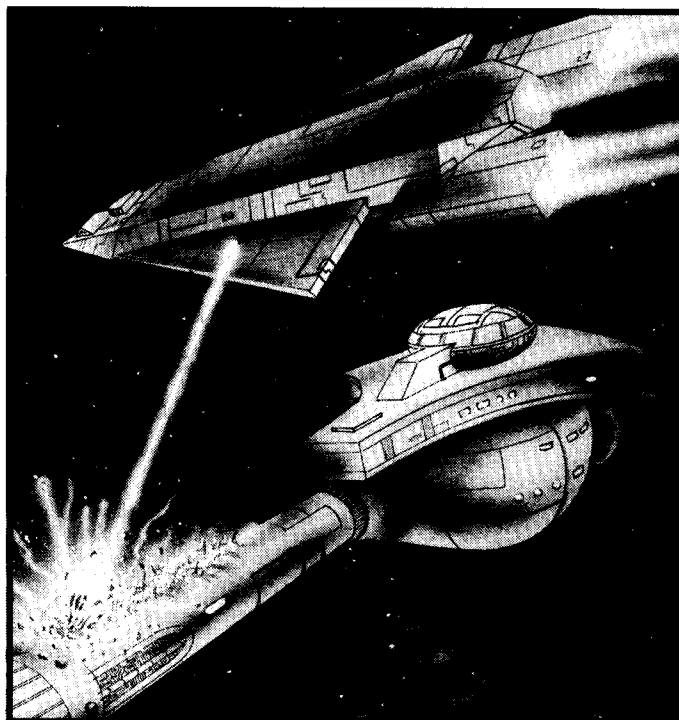
**(SL108.5) VICTORY CONDITIONS:** If the Orion captures a freighter and disengages before the end of turn 10, he wins. If he disengages without a freighter by the end of turn 10, the game is a draw. Otherwise, the Klingons win (even if both E4s are destroyed). (A cruiser is showing up on turn 11, so the Orion had better be elsewhere.)

**(SL108.6) VARIATIONS:** The scenario can be played again under different conditions by making one or more of the following changes:

**(SL108.61)** Replace the E4s with two police ships from any race, e.g. Fed Pol, Gorn FF, Hydran Gen (3 Admin shuttles each, no fighters), Kzin Pol, Lyrans Pol, etc.

**(SL108.62)** Delete one of the E4s, and use one disruptor armed freighter and one Q-ship in the convoy.

**(SL108.63)** Use one freighter with an F5 as escort.



**(SL108.7) BALANCE:** The scenario can be balanced between players of different skill levels by one or more of the following:

**(SL108.71)** Change the small freighters to large freighters.

**(SL108.72)** Replace the LR with a CR.

**(SL108.73)** Delete an E4 or add an E3.

## (SL108.8) TACTICS

**ORION:** Choose your weapons wisely. You need to be able to do a fair amount of damage in a short time. However, you can't afford to double your engines very often. Avoid head-to-head confrontation with the E4s. Try to tractor a freighter away from the main body.

**KLINGON:** Circle your wagons! Launch all your shuttles for defensive fire and stay concentrated. E4s should not get more than 3-5 hexes away from the freighters, if they leave them at all. Overload and wait for the Orion to come in. If you can bring down a couple of his shields before he gets rid of both E4s, he'll have lots of problems. Consider a scatter-pack. Even with slow drones, it will give him problems and force him to maneuver or destroy them with fire and give you a free shot.

**HISTORICAL OUTCOME:** See accompanying story. One of the E4s was crippled beyond repair, the other E4 was damaged, and the Orion LR disengaged.

★★★

# (SL109.0) The Taking of the Solitude



(Y149)

by Jim Hart, North Carolina

In Y149, the Tholian Harassment Squadron entered the Holdfast to steal web technology. As the lead ship of the squadron, the F5 *Vandal* was first to encounter the enemy. Unknown to each other, both ships were trying to maintain position, awaiting reinforcements.

**(SL109.1) NUMBER OF PLAYERS:** 2, the Klingon player and the Tholian player.

**(SL109.2) INITIAL SET UP**

**TERRAIN:** Use the Asteroid Belt map from Captain's Module B.  
**THOLIAN:** PC *Solitude* in hex 0303, heading C, speed 8, WS-II.  
**KLINGON:** F5 *Vandal* in hex 2914, heading A, speed 0, WS-III.

**(SL109.3) LENGTH OF SCENARIO:** The scenario continues until all forces belonging to one side have been destroyed, captured, or have disengaged.

**(SL109.4) SPECIAL RULES**

**(SL109.41) MAP:** The map is fixed; it does not float. Any unit leaving the map has disengaged and cannot return. No ship may disengage by acceleration. Klingon ships can only disengage in direction C and may not disengage by sublight evasion.

**(SL109.42) SHUTTLES AND PFs:** No shuttles or PFs have warp booster packs.

**(SL109.421)** There are no MRS shuttles in this scenario.

**(SL109.422)** There are no fighters in this scenario.

**(SL109.423)** There are no PFs in this scenario.

**(SL109.43) COMMANDER'S OPTION ITEMS**

**(SL109.431)** There are no Commander's Option Items in this scenario.

**(SL109.432)** All drones are type-II drones (speed 12). There are no special drones.

**(SL109.44) REFITS:** There are no refits of any kind.

**(SL109.45)** The *Solitude* cannot disengage or attempt self-destruction until turn 10 (it's expecting to be saved) or begin converting crew to militia until it is boarded.

**(SL109.46)** The *Vandal* has 2 extra boarding parties on loan from the *Widowmaker*. (Add to *Vandal*, mark off the *Widowmaker*).

**(SL109.47)** On turn 10, the rest of the Klingon force arrives within 2 hexes of 4230. All ships speed 8, WS-III, heading F:

D7C <i>Darkslayer</i>	F5 <i>Blackstar</i>
D6 <i>Abomination</i>	F5 <i>Khedive</i>
D6G <i>Widowmaker</i>	F5S <i>Scorn</i>

**(SL109.48)** At the beginning of each turn (including turn 1), the Tholian player rolls a die (in secret). On the turn in which the total is 35 or greater, and in each successive turn, Tholian reinforcements will arrive. Roll randomly to determine what ship(s) arrive:

1: PC	3: PC+	5: PC+ and DD
2: DD	4: 2 PC	6: C

These ships arrive in one of the following hexes. Roll randomly to determine:

1: 0101	3: 4201	5: 2230
2: 2201	4: 0130	6: Re-roll

All Tholian reinforcements are speed max, WS-III, heading at owning player's option. Note: No more than 2 Cs and 4 DDs can appear. If more are rolled, they do not appear.

**(SL109.49) WEB GENERATOR DESTRUCTION:** When boarded, Tholians can roll to destroy their web generators using the procedure to destroy a cloaking device (G13.162).

**(SL109.5) VICTORY CONDITIONS:** The victory is determined by how quickly a Tholian ship is captured and taken off the board.

*Vandal* captures *Solitude* before Klingon arrival: Amazing Victory

*Vandal* captures *Solitude* after Klingon arrival: Great Victory

Klingons capture Tholian ship with web generators: Victory.

Klingons disengage without capturing: Draw

Klingons lose a ship and disengage: Defeat

*Vandal* disengages before turn 10: Embarrassing Defeat

*Vandal* destroyed before turn 10: Crushing Defeat

*Vandal* captured before turn 10: Intolerable Defeat

All Klingon ships destroyed or captured: Unthinkable Defeat

**Note:** The "captured ship" does not have to be the *Solitude*. It can be any Tholian ship with undestroyed web generators.

**(SL109.6) VARIATIONS:** The scenario can be played again under different conditions by making one or more of the following changes:

**(SL109.61)** Replace the Klingon Force with the following Federation Force: CC, CL, ComC, DD, FF, SC. In this case, replace the *Vandal* with another FF.

**(SL109.62)** Allow the Klingon player to select different ships of the same general hull types and use tactical intelligence to avoid being surprised.

**(SL109.63)** Reduce the Klingon reinforcements to an F5C and 2 F5s (The *Vandal* still has 2 extra BPs, one from each of the two reinforcing F5s). The Tholians reinforcements are limited to 2 DDs and 2 PC+s, but one arrives automatically on each turn after Tholian reinforcements have been rolled to arrive.

**(SL109.7) BALANCE:** The scenario can be balanced between players of different skill levels by one or more of the following:

**(SL109.71)** Change the *Vandal* to an E4.

**(SL109.72)** Reduce the total for Tholian reinforcement arrival to 30, or even 25.

**(SL109.73)** Delete an F5 from the Klingon reinforcement force, or add a DD to the Tholian reinforcement force.

**(SL109.8) TACTICS**

**VANDAL:** Get in close as fast as possible and put boarding parties on the ship. Tractor it and haul it towards 4230. Do not waste any time. Convert crew to militia as soon as possible!

**SOLITUDE:** Stay away from the *Vandal*. Use the asteroids to your advantage. Remember, you're nimble! If caught and tractor, TAC and keep a fresh shield to the *Vandal*. That's six turns they can't get BPs on you if you have fresh shields. Use power either to (A) reinforce shields or (B) make the *Vandal* use more energy to maintain the tractor and, therefore, move slower. As soon as you're boarded, roll to destroy the web generators. Without them, you are useless to the Klingons.

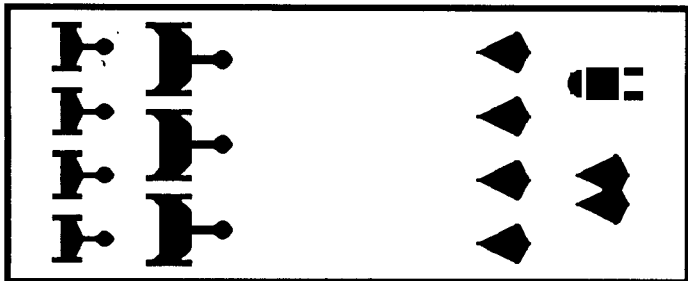
**KLINGON FORCE:** Grab a web-capable ship and get out as soon as possible.

**THOLIAN REINFORCEMENTS:** Destroy any captured ships before they disengage. Stay away from the Klingons until you have the forces to take them on. Wait for more reinforcements. Eventually, you'll be able to force a Klingon disengagement, which is about the best you can hope for.

**HISTORICAL OUTCOME:** See accompanying story.

★★★



**(SL110.0) Escape from the Holdfast**

(Y149) *by Steve Rushing and Jim Hart, North Carolina*

Having captured the PC *Solitude*, the Klingon task force makes a run for the border, but is herded into a Tholian trap.

**(SL110.1) NUMBER OF PLAYERS:** 2 (or more); the Tholian player(s) and the Klingon player(s).

**(SL110.2) INITIAL SET-UP**

**TERRAIN:** This game is played on the Asteroid Field map from Captain's Module B. [Alternatively, you can use the standard asteroid field (P3.1)].

**KLINGON:** All ships which survived Part 1, within 5 hexes of 4215. (If not playing Part 1, assume all ships survived.) Captured Tholian PC *Solitude* (or whatever ship you captured, if any). All ships WS-III, speed max, heading E or F.

**THOLIAN:** 1xPC, 1xPC+, 2xDD, 1xWT. Anywhere not within 15 hexes of 4215, WS-III, speed max, any heading. See Special Rules.

**(SL110.3) LENGTH OF SCENARIO:** The scenario continues until all forces belonging to one side have been destroyed, captured, or have disengaged.

**(SL110.4) SPECIAL RULES**

**(SL110.41) MAP:** The map is fixed; it does not float. Any unit leaving the map has disengaged and cannot return. The Klingons can disengage only by moving off the board from a hex in the 01xx hex row in direction E or F. They cannot disengage by acceleration or sublight evasion. Klingon ships leaving the board in any other direction count as destroyed.

**(SL110.42) SHUTTLES AND PFs:** No shuttles or PFs have warp booster packs.

**(SL110.421)** There are no MRS shuttles in this scenario.

**(SL110.422)** There are no fighters in this scenario.

**(SL110.423)** There are no PFs in this scenario.

**(SL110.43) COMMANDER'S OPTION ITEMS**

**(SL110.431)** There are no Commander's Option Items in this scenario.

**(SL110.432)** All drones are type-II (speed 12). There are no special drones.

**(SL110.44) REFITS:** There are no refits available for any ship.

**(SL110.45)** All Klingon ships have repaired all shield damage. The *Vandal* has repaired all shields and six internal systems from Part I and has one "2" box left on its Damage Control track. The captured Tholian ship has repaired nothing. Other Klingon ships may expend as much of their available repair as they want, but must roll normally for EDR.

**(SL110.46)** On every turn except the first, Tholian reinforcements may arrive. Roll before Energy Allocation to determine the type(s) of ship(s) that arrive and the board position:

**First Die Roll**

Reinforcement

1. No ship

2. PC

3. DD

4. C

5. PC and PC+

6. PC+ and DD

**Second Die roll**

Location

1. 0101

2. 0130

3. 2201

4. 2230

5. 4201

6. 4230

If two ships arrive, roll position for each ship.

**Note:** No more than 2 Cs and 4 DDs can appear. If others of those types are rolled, no ship appears. If a C or DD was destroyed in (SL109), it will not be available here (no replacement). Shield damage is repaired.

**(SL110.47)** The Tholian player has 40 "hexes" of web already laid in the asteroid field. Placement is at the Tholian player's option. No web may be more than 6 hexes long. Webs may run off the board. Assume 2 more hexes are consumed when running off the board. All webs begin at strength 15.

**(SL110.48) IF NOT PLAYING (SL109):** Assume the following:

**(SL110.481)** All Klingon ships from (SL109) appear.

**(SL110.482)** Score 5 internals on the *Vandal*. The ship has 12 crew units aboard and no BPs.

**(SL110.483)** The "captured ship" is a Tholian PC with no shields. Roll 25 points of internal damage on the ship, in groups of 10, 10 and 5, on the DAC. It has 8 Klingon crew units and 2 Klingon BPs (from *Vandal*), and 4 Tholian crew units (prisoners).

**(SL110.5) VICTORY CONDITIONS**

Klingons get a web-capable Tholian ship off the board: Victory

Klingons all disengage without a captured ship: Draw

Klingons lose ships and disengage without capture: Defeat

**Note:** The captured Tholian ship does NOT have to be the one they arrived with, but must have an intact web generator.

**(SL110.6) VARIATIONS:** The scenario can be played again by making one or more of the following changes:

**(SL110.61)** Replace the Klingon Force with the Federation Force listed in (SL109.61).

**(SL110.62)** Use tactical intelligence to determine the status and types of each side's ships.

**(SL110.63)** Use the forces listed in (SL109.63) and only the lower or upper half of the map.

**(SL110.7) BALANCE:** The scenario can be balanced between players of different skill levels by one or more of the following:

**(SL110.71)** Change the D7C to a D6.

**(SL110.72)** Replace the F5S with a normal F5.

**(SL110.73)** Delete or add an F5 or Tholian DD.

**(SL110.74)** Give the Tholian 10 more or 10 less web hexes at the beginning of the game, or make the web strength 10 (favors Klingon) or 20 (favors Tholian).

**(SL110.8) TACTICS**

**KLINGON:** Avoid the webs. Move through the asteroids at medium speeds. Follow each other. Use the D7C, the D6, and the F5s to form a defensive line around the captured ship. Have the *Widowmaker* put more crew and BPs on the *Vandal* and the captured ship. Look for a chance to capture another Tholian ship to sow confusion and make him cautious.

**THOLIAN:** Use your initial web set-up to direct the Klingon's movement. Take advantage of screens damaged by movement through asteroids. Use web to close off routes. Make it a maze. Remember, to draw, you need only destroy the captured ship. Use long-range disruptor fire on it if you have to.

**HISTORICAL OUTCOME:** See accompanying story.

★★★

# The Battle of Olsen's Reach

★ Bridge, Orion Raider *Doomsday Exchequer* ★

The Orion raider *Doomsday Exchequer* glided smoothly through the flurry of rocks and dust that made up the thin rings of the gas giant Morgana. Now and then a tractor or transporter flicked out to snare a particularly interesting bit of ore, and rarely one came upon a fragment of refined metal.

There had been a small trading base, Olsen's Reach, built here before the War started. The base had been destroyed in a battle a half-decade before. The *Doomsday Exchequer* had been picking up debris from the battle for most of a week, high-value salvage that could pay for the down time when Prince John thought it was too hot to conduct normal operations.

Normal operations being convoy raiding.

Of course, the *Doomsday Exchequer* was 30 years old (it was launched in Y149), and there were few convoys now that were ill-guarded enough to attack and worth the loot available to be taken. Asteroid mining had become, to the chagrin of the crew, the primary source of operating revenue. It was safer, but less profitable.

"Here's another one," Cromwell, the sensor operator, called out. "Refined metal...iridium, rhodium, duralumin... Scans about 50 kilos."

"That's a pretty big fragment," Sonja replied. As first officer of the *Doomsday Exchequer*, she had the con on this shift. "Helm, take us closer. Full scans, Mister Cromwell."

"Aye, aye" they both answered, and the *Doomsday Exchequer* slipped closer to the new-found fragment. More data began to pour in as the range closed to 23,000km.

"Any sign that it's a mine?" Sonja asked.

"None," Cromwell answered.

"Helm," Sonja commanded, "take us in to 5,000km, stay at warp 1.26. Cromwell, get me a visual when you can. Engineering, reinforce the #1 shield just in case."

"Working," responded the officers. Everyone on the bridge tensed as they passed 10,000km. If it was a mine, they would know soon enough.

"No sign of detonation," Cromwell reported, even though a detonation, had there been one, would have arrived before he knew it. "Coming up on visual." The screen flickered and the unknown object came into view as a pinpoint of light that slowly resolved itself until there was no doubt what it was.

"Captain to the bridge," was all that Sonja could manage to say. The rest of the bridge crew were silent.

★ Wardroom, Orion Raider *Doomsday Exchequer* ★

Prince John looked at the log bouy that had been carted in and placed in the center of the room. Battered, burned, but still intact. You could even make out the name, USS *Hornet* NCC-1714, painted on one side.

"Incredible," Prince John repeated. "Still intact, even after all this time. You know that someone has to have searched for it. Why didn't they find it?"

"Maybe they didn't search," Cromwell suggested.

"They probably didn't have the time," Sonja theorized. "Or maybe they just didn't take the time."

"Well," Prince John shrugged, "this just proves that no matter where you find something, that's where it was."

The two officers feigned a chuckle at another of the Prince's infamous jokes.

"Well," Prince John shrugged, "Let's hear what it has to say." Sonja pressed a pair of buttons and started the tapes.

★ Bridge, USS *Hornet* ★

"Dammit, Ensign," Captain Richmark snapped, "hold her steady on course, or I'll bust you back to stoking the boilers!"

"Trying, sir," Ensign James MacArthur replied, "but there are a lot of asteroids out here."

"Make your course corrections more smoothly," the first officer intervened. "And don't argue with the captain, or explain your inexperience. Just learn your job, and learn it quickly."

"Yes, commander," the ensign replied.

"Incoming message from *Kongo*," the communications officer announced.

"Put it on screen," Captain Richmark ordered.

"Richmark, this is Kosnett," came the voice as the screen flickered to life.

"Yes, commodore," Richmark answered. "What are your orders?"

"The *Yorktown* is approaching the planet Morgana. *Kongo* will take station 90,000km out on bearing 243 mark 4. I want you 30,000km on my left flank. Shut down your fire control systems as soon as you are on station. I have already ordered the *El Dorado* onto my right flank. All according to the protocols and our prior plans, of course."

"At once, commodore," Richmark responded. "Ensign, take station as directed." The *Hornet* changed course and slowed, moving toward its assigned place.

"Commodore, how soon does it start?"

"Not long," Kosnett replied. "The Romulan King Eagle is already in position near the planet, although it's cloaked for now. The other Coalition ships are in position as specified in the protocols. Olsen's Reach, the trading base, has been evacuated, of course."

"We'll be ready for anything, sir," Richmark declared.

"You know your orders?" Kosnett asked to confirm.

"Photons armed with overloads," Richmark responded. "Engines warm and ready to move us into range. My mission is to ensure the escape of *Yorktown* and Chairman Buckner by a full alpha-strike on the King Eagle if anything goes wrong."

"On station," the first officer reported. "Fire control on standby." Richmark waved him away.

"Don't get too hopeful about something going wrong, Richmark," Kosnett warned. "We're here to end a war, not start one. Try to remember that."

"I still think it's a trick," Richmark retorted.

"Right, Richmark," Kosnett replied with dripping sarcasm. "The Coalition has spent three months negotiating a ceasefire meeting so that they can arrange a battle with four heavy cruisers. There's a battle like that every week."

"It's not just an ambush here, commodore," Richmark insisted. "They could be using the whole negotiation process to set up for a major offensive when our command structure is paralyzed by a decapitating strike!"

"Richmark, you know very well that Council Chairman Buckner turned over his duties to Vice Chairman Baranov before he left Earth."

"Even so, I don't trust the Coalition."

"They probably don't trust you either," Kosnett replied. "I see your ship is in position, but hold your station better. You're all over the sky!"

"Consider the problem resolved, commodore," Richmark assured.

"Very well. The King Eagle is uncloaking, and we're about to start," Kosnett replied and broke the connection.

"Ensign MacArthur, hold this ship steady, or I'll fire you out of the probe launcher!" Richmark snarled.

★ Wardroom, Orion Raider *Doomsday Exchequer* ★

"Is this what I think it is?" Sonja asked as she stabbed down on the pause button.

"Appears so, love. The communications between the cruisers *Hornet* and *Kongo* moments before the Battle of Olsen's Reach," Prince John answered. "The moment that the General War might have ended, but didn't."

"When the ceasefire collapsed?" Sonja gasped. "When the Romulans fired torpedoes and revealed it was all a trap?"

"Not what I heard," Cromwell snorted. "The Federation suddenly activated their fire controls and prepared to fire. It was all a Federation trap!"

"There, there, chaps," Prince John chortled. "Let's get back to the tapes. Sonja?"

Sonja released the pause button.

★ Bridge, USS *Hornet* ★

"Hold this ship steady, Ensign," Captain Richmark threatened, "or I'll let you try doing it with two broken legs!"

"Sir, after the fire control was shut down, I don't have a solid navigational lock. I'm trying to compensate for the gravity of the planet with the thrusters, but I can't hold it rock steady by eyeball, sir."

"You idiot!" Richmark shouted. "Didn't they teach you how to do your job at the Academy?"

"Sir, can't we just activate the fire control system for a few seconds so I can get a position lock?"

"You stupid sot!" Richmark roared. "That would violate the damned ceasefire. And even if you got a good position, what makes you think an idiot like you could hold it any longer than the last position fix you had?"

"Ensign MacArthur," the first officer intervened, "Lock the optical sensors onto one of the moons and one of the beacon stars in the catalog, then slave the navigational computer to those references with a station-keeping program."

"Yes, commander," the ensign leapt to the task. "Lock the computer and slave the optical sights..."

"No, you nitwit!" Richmark exploded. "You have it all backwards! Lock the optics on a moon and a star, then slave the computer! How did you graduate from the Academy anyway? Did you bribe someone?"

"No, sir, I..."

"Be quiet and do your job, Ensign," the first officer ordered.

★ Wardroom, Orion Raider *Doomsday Exchequer* ★

"Rather excitable, our Captain Richmark," Sonja observed as she pressed the pause button.

"The ensign is an incompetent fool," Cromwell sneered. "He should be relieved and executed. He's not up to the task."

"Raising the question of why Richmark didn't just relieve him," Sonja judged. "This isn't the time for training a new helmsman. There has to have been someone on board who was trained in the job."

"Probably just went off duty," Cromwell suggested.

"So our incompetent Captain Richmark didn't properly arrange the duty schedules of his prime bridge crew?" Sonja inquired sarcastically.

"Enough!" Prince John slapped his hand on the table. "It's not impossible that the captain just enjoyed having a whipping boy around. Credit to the first officer for trying to train the lad and calm the waters. Let's go on."

"Is there really any point?" Sonja asked. "Everyone knows what happened."

"Some just won't admit it," Cromwell retorted.

Prince John held up his hand to silence the two officers, then pointed at Sonja to release the pause button.

★ Bridge, USS *Hornet* ★

"Any word from the *Yorktown*," Richmark asked.

"Chairman Buckner, Ambassador Kaleen, and Praetor Maxillius have just completed their opening statements."

"Opening statements, my ass," Richmark spat. "Everyone knows what's going to happen. We'll agree to a ceasefire and occupation of the border provinces. We don't have any choice now that the Romulans are in and our backs are against the wall. The Kzintis will sue for peace and if the Gorns ever do enter the war, it will be on the Romulan side! Don't you see we are *surrendering*? More's the shame of it."

"Still can't hold the position," Ensign MacArthur whimpered. "We've drifted almost 400 meters."

"What?" Richmark snapped. He called up the helm settings on his display "You moron! You forgot to include the factor for the orbital speed of the moon."

"Looking up the factor now, sir!"

"No, you stupid oaf," Richmark shook his head. "You can't look it up! The factor changes constantly. You have to have the computer set up an algorithm for it, to update the factor constantly."

"Use a rate-of-change-of-range equation, ensign," the first officer explained. "Factor in the rate of angular momentum, and remember that the planet is 3 degrees above the plane of the ecliptic for this system."

"With any luck," Richmark mumbled, "we'll drift far enough to violate the protocols and the Coalition will cancel the talks. We may lose the war, but at least we won't surrender."

★ Wardroom, Orion Raider *Doomsday Exchequer* ★

This time it was Cromwell who had pressed the pause button on the module attached to the log buoy.

"You see," he gloated, "Richmark wanted the ceasefire to collapse. It was probably his ship that activated its fire control first. We're finally going to have proof of what happened, of who violated their pledge and broke the ceasefire!"

Before Sonja could reply, Prince John had reached over and released the pause button himself.

★ Bridge, USS *Hornet* ★

"Klingon ship #2 is shifting position!" the weapons officer reported. "He's swinging around to face the *El Dorado*."

"Keep an eye on him. Helm, bring us around nine...er...ten degrees to port to face Klingon ship #2. Let him know that we spotted him."

"Aye, captain," Ensign MacArthur responded. "Swinging nineteen degrees to port."

"No, you fool. Ten degrees! Not nineteen."

"Sorry, sir," MacArthur sobbed, "we've already turned nineteen degrees. Actually, closer to twenty-three. I can't maneuver accurately without the fire control being active."

"Turn back twelve degrees to starboard," Richmark exhaled.

"Don't you think that all of this maneuvering is going to eventually cause an accident?" the first officer asked.

"Hardly, Number One," Richmark responded. "The Klingons can't do anything except launch active-guidance drones without their fire control active. And if they activate their fire control, I will activate our fire control."

"Activating fire control," Ensign MacArthur replied.

★ Wardroom, Orion Raider *Doomsday Exchequer* ★

"Oh my God!" Sonja gasped.

★ Bridge, USS *Hornet* ★

"Belay that!" Richmark screamed.

"What?" MacArthur asked.

The first officer lept from his position, shoved MacArthur out of his chair, and slammed his fist down on the panic switch that would cut power to the fire control scanners. The switch was there for use during wild weasel launches.

"Did you cut power in time?" Richmark gasped. "Did Kosnett notice the emissions? Did the Klingons notice? The system was only on for..."

"King Eagle has launched plasma torpedoes, captain!" the weapons officer shouted. "Both Klingons are launching drones! The KR has launched two torpedoes, apparently at *Yorktown*."

"Everybody has fire control scanners coming on line," the first officer reported.

"*Kongo* and *El Dorado* both have drones out."

"Ceasefire collapse!" Richmark bellowed. "Activate fire control! All weapons stand by to fire. Lock targets! Launch the multi-role shuttle in combat model!"

"Plasma torpedoes are closing," the science officer advised. "They're locked on us!"

"Engineering!" Richmark ordered. "Give me warp 2 ahead, maximum acceleration. Guns, target torpedoes on the King Eagle, fire at 80,000. Target phasers on the torpedoes, fire at 10,000! Launch the drones whenever you have solutions. Launch an ECM drone *now*!"

"*Yorktown* has fired overloads into the King Eagle! *El Dorado* is firing proximity photons at Klingon #2."

"*Kongo* is moving!"

"King Eagle is launching more torpedoes!"

"First plasma torpedo salvo is inbound!"

"Weasel, captain?" the first officer asked.

"Negative, Number One," Richmark shook his head. "We have to fire our overloads to get *Yorktown* out. Besides, they could be pseudoes."

"You're gambling!"

"My call, and Kosnett's orders."

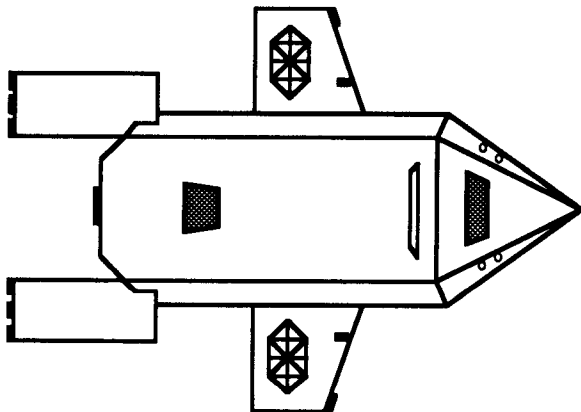
"Can *Kongo* fire at the torpedoes?"

"*Kongo* has drones and torpedoes inbound."

"King Eagle is trying to cloak. He's got a weasel out. KR is also cloaking. Both Klingons are moving. One has fired on *Kongo*. The other is launching more drones!"

"Phasers firing! Photons away!"

"Launch the log buoy!"



★ Wardroom, Orion Raider *Doomsday Exchequer* ★

"I can't believe it," Sonja gasped. "It was all a mistake! Five more years of war. Billions of people dead. And it was all a stupid mistake! And it's *still* going on!"

"That captain was a mistake waiting to happen," Cromwell insisted. "It's all his fault. It's still the Federation's fault."

"The point, people," Prince John snapped, "is that we are the only ones alive who know what happened. *Hornet* went down with all hands in that battle. No one else knows."

"There has to be some profit in this. Knowledge is power. How can we turn this to our advantage? How can we exchange this information for something we want, like a bigger ship, a better operating territory, some better weapons?"

"The Cartel Lord will know what to do," Sonja suggested.

"No doubt the Cartel Lord can make better use of the information," Prince John admitted. "Perhaps it would be worth a new Battle Raider to him?"

"You have always fancied the name *Broadsword*," Sonja reminded him.

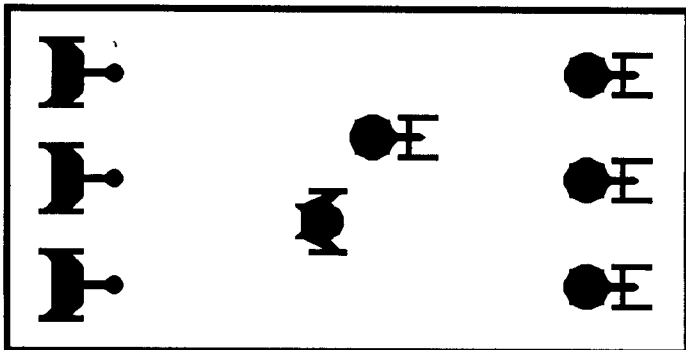
"And you have always wanted gatlings," Cromwell said.



"Set course for Orion," Prince John ordered. "We have a check to cash." ★★★



# (SL111.0) Ceasefire Collapse!



(Y174)

by Steven P Petrick, Florida

Late in Y173, the Coalition realized that their economies could not sustain the strain of the conflict much longer and set about negotiating an end to the war. The Federation Council, under Chairman Buckner, decided to accept the terms the Coalition was offering, at least until they could gather the strength to regain what they were about to surrender. The final negotiations took place near a gas giant in a system inside the Federation's defensive sphere, but near the junction where the Klingon and Romulan forces had linked up. Careful protocols were agreed to in order to insure there would not be an incident during the final negotiations.

The ceasefire collapsed into a melee. No one living knows what went wrong or who fired the first shot.

**(SL111.1) NUMBER OF PLAYERS:** 2; the Coalition player and the Federation player.

## (SL111.2) INITIAL SET-UP

**TERRAIN:** There is a Gas Giant 11 hexes across centered on hex 2215. If using the Gas Giant Map in the Map pack, ignore the rings (they are too thin to be significant). There are six small moons, one each in hexes 0712, 0720, 1306, 2128, 2807, and 3520.

**BASE:** Commercial Platform with two cargo pods in hex 1015 (Olsen's Reach), WS-0, facing A, no rotation. There is only one crew unit on the station; it can only operate life support and shields. See (SL111.66). The platform is a Federation unit (ship).

**FEDERATION:** CAR+ *Yorktown* in 1515, CAR+ *El Dorado* in 1009, CAR+ *Hornet* in 1607, CC+ *Kongo* in 1308, all at WS-III, heading D, speed 0. See rules (SL111.45) to (SL111.48).

**COALITION:** KE *Vindex* in 1516, K7RB *Finality* in 1623, D7L *Deftslayer* in 1323, D7K *Ruthless* in 1021, all at WS-III, heading A, speed 0. See rules (SL111.46) to (SL111.48).

**(SL111.3) LENGTH OF SCENARIO:** The scenario continues until all forces belonging to one side have been destroyed, captured, have disengaged, or until the end of turn 7 (when ships standing by outside of the ceasefire zone would arrive).

## (SL111.4) SPECIAL RULES

**(SL111.41) MAP:** The map is fixed; it does not float. Any unit leaving the map has disengaged and cannot return. The Federation player can only disengage from the xx01 (north) edge. The Coalition can only disengage from the xx30 (south) edge.

**(SL111.42) SHUTTLES AND PFs:** No shuttles or PFs have warp booster packs.

**(SL111.421)** If using the optional MRS shuttles, each ship in this scenario has one MRS. If a race has more than one type of MRS, the player can select either one.

**(SL111.422)** There are no fighters in the historical scenario. If added in a non-historical option, use the appropriate rules.

**(SL111.423)** There are no PFs in the historical scenario. If added in a non-historical option, use the appropriate rules.

## (SL111.43) COMMANDER'S OPTION ITEMS

**(SL111.431)** As these ships have been specially prepared for this mission and know what they are going to encounter, each ship has 4 T-bombs, 10 extra boarding parties, and 2 commando squads. The *Finality* and *Vindex* each have an NSM. Note that the cost of these items count in the Modified Victory Conditions (S2.2) as victory points for the enemy.

**(SL111.432)** All drones are "medium;" speed-20.

Each drone-using ship may select any special drones without regard to the historical percentages. All drones will have ATG, extended range, and/or be on a type-III frame. ADD racks and G racks may have some or all type-VI drones at the owning player's option. Ships with drones have double reloads.

**(SL111.44) REFITS:** All ships have all refits available at this date. The Klingon ships each have one back-up UIM module.

**(SL111.45) FEDERATION RULES:** The *Yorktown* is holding full overloads. Of the other three ships, one was holding proximity fuzed torpedoes, one was holding full overloads, and the third had standard loads at the end of the last turn. The Federation player may select which of the three is holding what loads and is not limited to the historical distribution (e.g. *Hornet* might have the proximity fuzed photons while *Kongo* has the full overloads etc.). All ships must have at least one wild weasel prepared.

Any ship can be considered to have begun activating fire control on impulse 31 on the previous turn at the Federation player's option. Each ship may have launched a drone from its drone rack on impulse 31 of the previous turn using either "Tame" or "Wild Boar" targeting (note that "Wild Boar" requires a two space type-IIIIX drone). Record the targets and place the drones on the board within one hex of the launching ships. There are some exceptions to the above in (SL111.48).

**(SL111.46) COALITION RULES:** The *Vindex* launched plasma torpedoes on impulses 28 (type R) and 29 (two type Fs) of the previous turn. These may be pseudoes or real at the Coalition player's option. *Finality* launched two torpedoes of any type the ship has, including pseudoes, on impulse 30 of the previous turn. *Ruthless* and *Deftslayer* both launched two type-IIIIXX drones with any warhead allowed for that frame on "Wild Boar" trajectories from their racks on impulse 30 of the previous turn. Before play begins, the Coalition player must place these seeking weapons on the board at the appropriate ranges from their launch platforms and record their targeting, warhead types, and whether or not the plasmas are pseudoes.

Each Romulan ship MUST have at least one wild weasel ready, Klingon ships may. Each Romulan ship MUST pay the full cost of activating its cloak during Energy Allocation of turn 1. If the real type-R torpedo was fired on the prior turn, three batteries on the *Vindex* are empty at the start of Energy Allocation for turn 1.

## HISTORY

Any Coalition ship can be considered to have begun activating fire control on impulse 30 of the previous turn at the Coalition player's option. Nothing can be fired or launched at the commercial platform until turn 2, nor can any other form of attack be launched against it.

**(SL111.47) ALL:** All ships except the Federation ship which activated its fire control during the preceding turn (SL111.48), may begin the scenario on passive fire control retaining the ECM benefit. No seeking or other shuttles may be on the board at start, but all shuttles may start armed or prepared for a special mission [exception to the normal WS-III (S4.13) rules]. Seeking weapons on the board at the start ARE deducted from the launching ships' racks/tubes.

**(SL111.48) FIRE CONTROL:** One of the Federation ships accidentally activated its fire control in the "Switch Fire Control Step" of the "Initial Stage" of the "Impulse Activity Segment" and then deactivated it during the "Launch Shuttlecraft Step" of the "Shuttle and PFs Function Stage" of the "Impulse Activity Segment" of impulse 28 of the previous turn. Before the Coalition player places his torpedoes and drones, the Federation player rolls a die to determine which ship accidentally activated its fire control. A roll of 1 or 2 is the *Hornet*, 3 or 4 is *Kongo*, and 5 or 6 is *El Dorado*. The ship selected by this roll cannot gain the ECM benefit for having its fire control off for 32 consecutive impulses, does not begin to reactivate its fire control until impulse 32 [instead of impulse 31 as provided in (SL111.48)], and cannot launch a drone until the first impulse of turn 1. It can leave its fire control off and gain the ECM benefit on impulse 28 of turn 1. (Historically, the *Hornet* activated its fire control, but the Federation player should roll randomly *after* specifying the status of photon loading for the ships.)

**(SL111.5) VICTORY CONDITIONS:** Use the Modified Victory Conditions (S2.2). The Coalition receives a 250-point bonus if *Yorktown* is destroyed. The Alliance receives a 250-point bonus if *Vindex* is destroyed. These bonuses represent the outrage each side feels at the apparent treachery of the other.

**(SL111.6) VARIATIONS:** The scenario can be played again under different conditions by making one or more of the following changes:

**(SL111.61)** Replace the Romulans with a Lyran CC and CA and the Federation with a Kzinti CC and three BCs, or simply replace the Federation with a Tholian CC and three CAs. You could also reverse the roles with a Federation & Gorn force against four Romulans, or a Federation & Kzinti force against four Klingons.

**(SL111.62)** As all participants had to arrive on passive fire control, much information on the ships of each side is not known. Allow the Coalition player to substitute other "D" hulls for the three "D" hulls in his force. This can make it tense as the Federation player suddenly finds that all the Coalition ships are Romulan, or perhaps the "D" hulls are all Klingon.

**(SL111.63)** Replace the Federation force with four FFGs, and the Coalition force with an F5L, F5, BattleHawk, and SkyHawk-A (or three NCLs and a CLC versus a D5L, D5, SparrowHawk-A, and War Eagle). These smaller ships will allow the scenario to be played in less time.

**(SL111.64)** Change the year and use fast drones.

**(SL111.65)** Have the Andromedans "Crash" the peace talks. (They would like the war to continue so as to weaken the Galaxy for their own invasion.) Two Intruders each with two Cobras and a Courier on board are placed one each in hexes 4201 and 4230, heading at player's option, speed max, WS-III.

**(SL111.66)** Olsen's Reach station was to be the site of the final signing. Once the agreement had been made, both sides were to meet face-to-face on the platform to sign the articles. Players can start the action at this point. Each can place eight boarding parties (two from each ship) and a crew unit on the station, representing their races' leaders and their honor guards. While the battle is raging outside, either player can attempt to reinforce the station with more boarding parties in an effort to capture the other side's leader. Note that neither side will be able to "voluntarily" lower the shields on the station unless they win the boarding action. Neither side can destroy the station while their leader is aboard it. In this case, the destruction of the *Yorktown* or *Vindex* (SL111.5) is not necessary, but whichever ship recovers the leaders assumes the mission.

**(SL111.67)** Replace *Hornet* with a Gorn BC and/or *El Dorado* with a Kzinti BC to reflect the participation of other Alliance members. (Including the Gorns would require changing the date of the battle, leading to a host of other changes, e.g. refits.) The *Kongo* can use any type of photon loading.

**(SL111.7) BALANCE:** The scenario can be balanced between players of different skill levels by one or more of the following:

**(SL111.71)** Change the King Eagle to a War Eagle.

**(SL111.72)** Replace the King Eagle with a NovaHawk-K.

**(SL111.73)** Delete some or all of the refits on one side.

**(SL111.8) TACTICS:** The battle revolves around *Yorktown* and *Vindex*. If one (and only one) dies, that side will probably lose.

**ROMULAN:** The *Vindex* has three choices: launch the plasma torps on passive at one of the back ships, bolt them on passive at *Yorktown*, or hold them and cloak out to look for an option to use them later. Your basic tactics should be to hit *Yorktown* first, then see if you think you can defeat the entire Federation force. If not, destroy the platform (it's worth 50 points; don't bother if it will cost you more than that in crippled ships) and run.

**FEDERATION:** Extract *Yorktown* from close contact. Then review your options. Think carefully about firing *Yorktown*'s overloads at the *Vindex*. Feedback damage could leave you open for his phasers and bolts. If you think you can take on the Coalition without losing *Yorktown*, then fight it out. Otherwise, your best course is to leave.

**(SL111.9) PLAYTESTER COMMENTS:** That first turn is a wild melee. Careful use of EW, shield reinforcement, tactical maneuvers, HETs, EM, and mid-turn speed changes will make the difference.

**HISTORICAL OUTCOME:** *Yorktown* was badly damaged but managed to escape, as did the *Vindex*. One Klingon ship was destroyed, as well as the *Hornet*. The Coalition destroyed Olsen's Reach station, apparently thinking that it was part of the Federation treachery. The Romulans cloaked and disengaged; the remaining Federation and Klingon ships withdrew simultaneously toward fleets stationed just outside of the ceasefire zone. It was a bloody and inconclusive battle whose only real outcome was to insure that the war would go on for 11 more bloodsoaked years. ★★★

## IN THIS ISSUE...

As you can see, this issue is a bit larger than the previous ones. With this extra space, we have expanded some of your favorite features and added a few new ones.

Our HISTORY section includes two stories this time. *Escape from the Holdfast* is the longest SFB story ever published; *The Battle of Olsen's Reach* is one of the shortest.

DATABASE has expanded slightly. A key feature of this issue is the introduction for the new Captain's (Doomsday) Edition of SFB. Two new features have been added. *Decisions of the Board of Proposals* will tell you what happened to all of those ideas we received for new expansions. You can now Ask *Kommodore Ketrick* your rules questions. The usual *Phaser-G*, *Why?*, and *Example* articles have all expanded.

SCENARIOS will continue to form a key element of any Captain's Log. Beyond the four scenarios in the HISTORY section, there are five more. We have attempted to cover as many of the races of SFB as possible. One of these, *Recon in Force*, is a Scenario Generator that covers almost everyone. If anyone wonders why seven of the nine scenarios feature Klingons, it's something of a fluke. Both stories have Klingons,

and the two historical scenarios are ones held over from past issues because we had too many Klingon scenarios in those issues. We decided to go ahead and print them this time.

TACTICS is the new title for the old Academy section. (With a new introductory game entitled *Star Fleet Academy* on the launch pad, we wanted to avoid confusion.) We have the usual *Term Papers* (the largest selection ever published!), *Tactics Board*, and *Ask Uncle Ardak*. For a tactics article, we managed to convince 1990 National Champion Tom Carroll to write up the winning tactics he used. We always meant to have the new Fleet Captain write such an article, and some of them even tried to, but this was the first to reach print.

FEDERATION & EMPIRE has a very large section, with questions, a scenario, a set of optional rules, a preview of Total War, a large collection of *Tactical Notes*, and some *Commentaries* on the new DF&E edition.

NEW SHIPS continue to appear in Captain's Log. We have two in this issue. You'll find their SSDs at the back.

—Stephen V Cole, Editor-in-Chief

☺☺☺

## NEW SHIPS FOR STAR FLEET BATTLES

### (R2.943) FEDERATION WAR DESTROYER

The Federation NCL class had effectively taken over the shipyards that originally produced the Destroyer class, ending DD production before the Federation entered the General War. This left a gap between the NCL and the FFG which was covered by the steadily dwindling force of DDs and CLs. By Y174 the shortage of these classes was becoming acute, particularly with so many of them being converted to support roles, such as scouts, carrier escorts, and minesweepers. Recognizing the need for a War Destroyer class, the Federation commissioned two competing designs, the DW and the FFB. The DW was eventually selected as it was larger and more capable than the FFB. The first prototype (*Humberto Ortega*) appeared in Y175, and production was begun in Y176 with the *Enrique Bermudez*. Others included the *Savimbi*, *Slovo*, *Massoud*, and *Saddam*.

Data on DW: BPV about 97, breakdown rating 5-6, size class 4, turn mode C, Sensor-Scanner-DC-ExD same as DD+, crew 20, Marines 8, three admin shuttles with one spare, drone rack is type-G, movement cost 0.50. No plasma variant.

(R2.947) DWS: Scout. Replace photons with sensors.

(R2.948) DWD: Drone ship; replace photons with drone-B.

(R2.949) DWE: Carrier Escort variant. Replace photons with drone-G. Replace ph-3s with ph-Gs.

(R2.950) DWT: Cargo variant. Delete photons and forward phasers. Delete AWRs. Split batteries into two singles (one in the AWR slot). Move labs to photon position, bridge to forward phaser position, shuttles to bridge position (one admin, one HTS). Add 9 cargo boxes.

(R2.951) DWM: Minesweeper variant. Delete tractors and AWRs. Move transporters to AWR position. Replace photons with tractors; add six mine racks (three on each side, in tran/trac positions); increase front shield to 36; has two MSS, one Admin.

**FEDERATION & EMPIRE:** DW, combat factor 6/3, build cost 4, command rating 5. Production: Y175 replace one NCL with one DW in Fall. Y176 replace 1xNCL and 1xFF with 2xDW in both turns. In Y177 and thereafter, replace 2xNCL and 4xFF with 6xDW in each turn.

DWS: Factors ♦2-6/1-3, normal sub/conversion.

DWE: Factors 4-6/2-3.

☺☺☺

### (R2.50) FED BATTLE FRIGATE (REVISED)

As the General War dragged on, the Federation eventually found itself in the same position as the other races. The "frigate" class was no longer adequate for many missions, being too easily destroyed by the more powerful cruisers being fielded. Other races, with weaker frigates, had faced this problem earlier and had solved it by fielding a "war destroyer class." The Federation reluctantly agreed to a similar option.

The Bureau of Ships solicited bids from shipyards in Y174, and two designs were eventually selected as the finalists. One of these was the *Ortega*-class war destroyer, the other was the battle frigate designed by Bath Rhodium Works, builders of the excellent *Burke*-class frigates.

The Battle Frigate was an attempt to pack 3/4 of the firepower of a war cruiser into a frigate hull. Like the *Ortega*-class, it used three standard frigate engines to attain the required power and speed. The armament of three photons (also seen in the *Ortega*-class) was controversial as Federation doctrine had previously mounted these weapons in pairs (with the sole exception of the police corvettes). The phaser armament was considered barely adequate for the mission.

The first FFB, NCC-471 *Marko Ramius*, was completed in Y175 and was involved (under Captain Syverson) in an extensive "fly off" competition with the *Humberto Ortega*. While the FFB was found to be adequate, it was judged to be too small to have adequate "growth room" for the future addition of new systems and the development of new variants. Even though the design had been rejected, a total of four FFBs were built as part of the original contract (NCC-472 *Gunter Prien*, NCC-473 *Yahachi Tanabe*, and NCC-474 *Joseph Enright*), and the FFG remained in production through the end of the war (in smaller numbers).

**FED & EMPIRE:** Combat factor = 6/3; production cost 4; command rating 5; replace one FF per turn.

**NOTE:** The SSD and rule above are from Captain's Module R2 and replace the SSD and rule from Volume III of the Commander's Edition. The old ship design (which was fatally flawed by a huge increase in volume with no increase in movement cost) is no longer valid. But then, at least this FFB is one that you can use. You see, it's not conjectural; it's real.☺☺☺

# STAR FLEET COMMUNICATIONS CENTER

## HAVING A CONVENTION?

ADB publishes announcements of upcoming conventions that have SFB tournaments (in Starletter) and lists of SFB tournament winners (in Captain's Log). Send such information to ADB well in advance of the convention. We can only publish the information that we receive. If your convention or winners did not receive the proper announcement, it's because we didn't get it (unless noted otherwise).

TFG operates its own convention support program. Send them a stamped self-addressed envelope for information on what they can do for you.

## TOURNAMENT RULES UPDATE

For the convenience of tournament players and judges, a complete set of tournament rules and SSDs were published in Captain's Log #6 with minor errata in Captain's Log #7.

Oops, here is some more errata:

- ♦ Orion TC wing fusion arcs are L+LF/RF+R, not LS/RS. Orion ship can define two choices for the A and B weapons before play and change between them at the start of each round after knowing the opponent.

- ♦ WYN: All optional weapons (except phasers) hit on "torp."

- ♦ Tholian TC has two snares (arcs L and R).

- ♦ Klingon TC has two drone points.

- ♦ Reminder: It is the responsibility of the cloaked ship to engage. A cloaked ship can lose a judge's decision (even if ahead on points) if found to be using the cloak to avoid battle rather than its proper uses of repair and reloading weapons. If the cloaked ship is far enough ahead to win a decision, it has nothing to fear from the enemy by uncloaking. The hunting ship is not obliged to fire at a cloaked ship.

Of course, CL#6 and CL#7 are out of print and will not be reprinted. The Tournament rules will reappear as part of Module T. In the meantime, if you do not have those Logs, you can obtain a copy of the tournament ships and rules through the TFG spare parts department for \$3.

## ORIGINS 89 REPORT

**FLEET CAPTAINS:** 1st Place (and 1989 National SFB Champion) John Viles (Houston, Romulan), 2nd Place Eric Hyman (LA, Hydran), 3rd Place Mike Hault (ISC) and Ed Slusarek (Fed); Ladies Champion Lisa Parker.

**PATROL:** 1st Don "Kamikaze" Clarke (Fed), 2nd Eric Reiser (Gorn), 3rd Ron Spitzer (WYN) and Bruce Graw (Rom).

Records for the Combat Rally and F&E tournaments were lost. We apologize and hope to find these soon.

**JUDGES:** Frank Crull, Steven Petrick, Keith Velleux, Owen Riley, and Stephen V Cole. Miss Star Fleet 1989 was "Chantal."

## ORIGINS 90 REPORT

**FLEET CAPTAINS:** 1st Place (and 1990 National SFB Champion) Tom Carroll (New Jersey, Gorn), 2nd Place Bill Hyman (USAF, WYN), 3rd Place Eric Hyman (Hydran) and Ed Slusarek (Fed). Overseas Champion Steve Beer (UK).

**PATROL:** 1st Ralph "Polish Anchor" Wiazowski (Gorn), 2nd Ken "Karate Plasma" Lin (Romulan), 3rd Richard Moyer (Fed) and David Oberheu (Kzinti).

**SATURDAY PATROL:** Tie: James Ferrell and Donald Clarke, both 5-0 flying Federation CCs.

**JUDGES:** Stephen V Cole, Steven P Petrick, Frank Crull, John Hammer, Keith Velleux, Owen Riley, Steve Rushing.

MISS STAR FLEET 1990 was Amie Tarashke, who was also the Ladies Champion.

## GEN-CON 90 REPORT

**FLEET CAPTAINS:** 1st Frank "Slim" Gilson (WYN TC *Ballistic Pig*), 2nd Ken Lin (Romulan), 3rd James Mayes (Fed) and Eric Hyman (Hydran).

**PATROL:** 1st Bruce Graw (Rom), 2nd Ronald Spitzer (Andro), 3rd John Stiff (Andro) and John Hanna (Lyran).

**SATURDAY PATROL (WRECKER'S BALL):** 1st John Hilgers (Lyran 6-0), 2nd Ryan Love (Kzinti, 5-0).

**JUDGES:** Stephen V Cole, Steven P Petrick, John Hammer, John Berg, Keith Velleux. Aide: Ken Stith. Thanks to John Hilgers for copying extra SSDs.

## BATTLE REPORTS

SFB Tournament winners at conventions since CL7:

- ★ **WARCON '89**, 1-3 Feb 89, Texas A&M: 1st Quentin Cantrell (Klingon), 2nd David Ethridge (Hydran), 3rd Paul Kramer (Romulan). Judge: Bobby Simmons; reported by Cory Light. Players used larger ships in each round.

- ★ **I-CON VIII**, 31 Mar - 2 Apr 89, SUNY, Stony Brook, NY: 1st Tom Chartoff (Kzinti), 2nd Hwan Rhee (Andro), 3rd Tom Carroll (Andro) and Edward Slusarek. Judge: John Hammer.

- ★ **POINT CON XII**, 21-23 Apr 89, United States Military Academy, West Point, NY: 1st Edward Slusarek (Kzinti), Robert Patterson (Gorn), Dan Kong (WYN). Judge: John Hammer. Special Congratulations to Edward Slusarek who held onto his PointCon Champion's Title for the second year in a row.

- ★ **ST LOUIS Star Fleet Patrol Tournament**, 15 Jul 89, St. Louis, MO: 1st Mike Guntly (Tholian), 2nd Gary Rucker (Kzinti), 3rd Mike Benjamin (Romulan). Judge: Gregg Dieckhaus.

- ★ **ARCHON-13**, 28 Jul 89, St. Louis IL: 1st Kent Logsdon (Kzinti), 2nd Cris Synder (Fed). Report by Gregg Dieckhaus.

- ★ **GENCON**, 10-13 Aug 89: 1st Jay Clendenny (WYN), 2nd Joe McCloud (WYN), 3rd Ron Gilbert (Kzinti), 4th John Hillgers (Lyran). Judges: Keith Velleux and John Berg.

- ★ **CAPITALCON**, 5 Aug 89, Springfield, IL: 1st Gregg Dieckhaus (Lyran), Kent Logsdon (Kzinti). Judge: Andrew Dederer. Reported by Gregg Dieckhaus.

- ★ **WARP SPEED**, Aug 89, Australia: 1st Les Steed (Gorn), 2nd Brenton Birchmore (Romulan), 3rd Jason Gray (Gorn).

- ★ **NANCON 89**, Sept 89, Houston, TX: Captains: 1st Quentin Cantrell (Rom-ISC), 2nd Terry Haugh (Lyran-ISC), 3rd Stuart Gelb (Rom-Orion) and Greg Wheelless (Hydran-Kzinti).. Combat Rally was won by Chriss Address (Tholian).

- ★ **LEHICON I**, 2 Sep 89, Easton, PA: 1st Tom Carroll (Klingon), 2nd Dee Taylor (Andromedan), 3rd Mark Reynolds (Klingon). Judge: Rick Phelps. Reported by Tom Carroll.

- ★ **DRAGONCON 89**, Sept 89, Atlanta GA: Results were lost due to an accident. Our apologies to those who ran and played this event. Anyone with records, please send them to ADB.

- ★ **TOLEDO GAMING CON VII**, 7-8 Oct 89, University of Toledo, Scott Park Campus, Toledo, OH: 1st Bruce Graw (Kzinti), 2nd Jeff Hodak (Klingon), 3rd John Steele (Fed), 4th Gary Blumenthal (Kzinti). Judge: Dave Oberheu.

- ★ **COUNCIL OF THE FIVE NATIONS**, 6-8 Oct 89, Schenectady, NY: 1st Donald "Kamikaze" Clarke (Federation), 2nd Edward Slusarek (Federation), 3rd Joseph Mannino (Romulan) and Russel Schaefer (Gorn). Judge: John Hammer.

- ★ **ROVACON 89**, 7 Oct 89: 1st Rodney Smith (Orion), 2nd Stephen Wertz (Andromedan), 3rd Larry Lyons (WYN). Judge: C. R. Sisson. Reported by Larry Lyons.

- ★ **SOONERCON 89**, 17-19 Nov 89, Oklahoma City: 1st Paul Anders (Klingon), 2nd Tom Grœulich (Hydran), 3rd Eric Ellsworth (Orion), 4th Rob Simmons (Fed). Judge: Chuck Strong.

- ★ **S&S GAMING 90**, 20-21 Jan 90, NY, NY. 1st Edward Slusarek (Fed), 2nd Russel Schaefer (Gorn), 3rd Robert Boyette (Gorn) and Richard Powers (Kzinti). Judge: John Hammer.



★ LEHICON II, 2-4 Mar 90, Bethlehem, PA: 1st Tom Carroll (Gorn), 2nd Donald Clarke (Federation), 3rd Joe Mannino (Romulan) and Michael Haut (Romulan). Judge: John Hammer.

★ I-CON IX, 30 Mar - 1 Apr 90, SUNY, Stony Brook, Long Island, NY: 1st Edward Slusarek (Andromedan), 2nd Michael Haut (Romulan), 3rd Donald Clarke (Federation) and Stephen Achan (Andromedan). Judge: John Hammer.

Reports on the winners at SFB tournaments must include the following information: Convention name, date(s), format (ships used, structure, standard CL6 rules, etc.), top four finishers (and the ship(s) that they flew), judge(s), any special information. Tournament winners are published in Captain's Log; Tournament Announcements are published in Starletter.

If your tournament was not reported here, send a report to Amarillo Design Bureau for inclusion in Captain's Log #9.

### STAR FLEET BATTLES PLAYER CONTACT SYSTEM

Task Force Games has announced the inauguration of a new player contact system. All known SFB players are being entered into a computer database. If you want your name listed, just send a postcard to Task Force Games and state your name, address, and phone number and that you want to be put on the SFB Player Contact List. You can do this by letter, but please don't include a note asking to be listed in the middle of a long letter asking game questions and/or proposing new ships. Put it on a separate page so we can hand it to the lady managing the system and keep things as efficient (and costs as low) as possible. We list every player we hear from.

The list is arranged in zip code order. To obtain a copy of the list for your area, send a stamped self-addressed envelope and \$1 to Task Force Games and request the list for your area. (Please, this must be separate from all other correspondence in order to keep efficiency high and cost low.) If you wish to obtain the list for an adjacent non-sequential area (probably across a state line) include the zip code there and another \$1. Players cannot order lists for non-adjacent areas. TFG will not mail the first lists until January 91 (so that we can compile the most complete list possible) but will accept your order, enter your name, and hold your envelope for the official release date.

### STAR FLEET BATTLES COMPUTER NETWORK

Star Fleet Battles is active on the GENie computer network. Star Fleet Battles is Category 10, page 805, in the Games Roundtable. Topics discuss SFB, F&E, Doomsday, questions, new rules, major projects, tournaments, conventions, new ships, etc. An active Play-by-Mail operation will be found in Topic 34. You can send term papers directly to Topic 7 or tactical notes to Topic 19.

Many downloads (new SSDs, software to allow most computers to read SSD files, playtest scenarios, prototype rules, drafts of articles, lists of players by zip code, etc.) are available in a Library. (All downloads are official ADB material; public uploads are allowed only if approved in advance.) Files downloaded from GENie remain under ADB's copyright and are not to be uploaded to other systems.

Real Time Conferences with top SFB staff members are held on Tuesday nights (11pm ET) in Room 3 of page 805;2.

You can send Electronic Mail to ADB (via STEVE.COLE).

Ask your computer dealer or local bulletin board for information on how to gain access to GENie, or call GENie at 800--638--9636 and ask them for information. Please don't call Task Force or ADB for advice on how to use GENie; everything we know is in the manual. Sorry, we can't start an SFB topic on the network you are using. It's actually easier for you to get into GENie that for ADB to get into other networks.

If you cannot find the SFB section, send Email to ADB\$, STEVE.COLE, SFB-ASSIST, TFG, or MILITARY-RT.

### WHAT HAPPENED TO LOG #1-#7?

The first seven issues of Captain's Log are out of print. While they will not be reprinted as such, we will make the material available (after we update it to Doomsday Standards) and release it in various forms. The scenarios will go into new Scenario Modules (S1, S2, etc.), the fiction into a compilation, the tactics and other still-valid information into a "Best Of."

### STARLETTER

The official Star Fleet newsletter has four information-filled pages, including (typically): New product announcements, conventions, proposed rules, a new playtest scenario, F&E, and the SSD of a new ship. Starletter also includes information on Task Force new releases and mail order specials.

Starletter #65 included the Lyran Mountain Lion and Scenario SP1311 Roar of the Golden Cub.

Starletter #66 included the Kzinti Scout Drone Frigate and the revised scenario SP0070 ...And Settle Their Hash.

Starletter is mailed on or before the 15th of odd-numbered months (Jan 15, March 15, etc.). Announcements of upcoming conventions or tournaments should reach Task Force by the 15th of the month before mailing date to ensure inclusion.

Subscriptions are \$5 for six issues in the US, Canada, APO, and FPO (mailed first class). Overseas subscriptions are \$10 for six issues and are sent airmail. All payments must be in US funds. All checks must be drawn on a US bank and have magnetic code numbers on them. International Postal Money Orders (and US postal money orders) are acceptable. Back issues are available from Task Force Spare Parts for \$2 each.

### TAKE A NUMBER!

This issue of Captain's Log inaugurates a new system. All questions, examples, proposals, Why?, and other such items will have a number assigned. This number will be used to index these questions and other items for future reference.

### TOP SFB PLAYING GROUPS

Captain's Log carries announcements of the top SFB playing groups, those with regular meetings, large memberships, GENie access, and/or members of the SFB staff:

★ Battle Group Houston: John Viles, 5840 Glenmont #70, Houston TX 77081 (GENie F.CRULL). Meets weekly.

★ Battle Group Los Angeles: Contact Allen Treschler c/o New World Computing (NWC..TFG), 818-999-0606; or Ray Olesen (R.OLESEN), 301 North Bushnell #3, Alhambra CA 91801.

★ Operational (F&E) Group Philadelphia: Owen Riley (GENie O.RILEY), 524 Atterbury Road, Villanova, PA 19085.

★ Battle Group Detroit: Keith Velleux (K.VELLEUX1), 8231 Kensington, Apt 482 Bldg #20, Davison MI 48423.

★ Battle Group Chicago: John Berg (J.BERG11), 6122 N Artesian, Chicago IL 60659.

★ Battle Group New York: John Hammer (J.HAMMER1), 79-10 Bell Blvd, Bayside, NY 11364. Meets most Sundays.

★ Battle Group North Carolina: Jim Hart (GENie J.HART11), 3301--D, Walnut Creek Parkway, Raleigh NC 27606.

★ Battle Group Denver: Marc Michalik (M.MICHALIK1), 10360 E Jewell Ave #95, Denver, CO 80231.

★ Australia: Warp Speed, Garry Thomas L Koellen, 1 Ramosus Way, Bidwill, New South Wales, 2770, Australia.

Send your entries for this column to ADB.

### REMEMBER THAT OLD TERM PAPER?

If you (long ago) sent ADB a term paper, scenario, ship, etc., you might want to even send a stamped self-addressed envelope in case we have a reply on file for you. We are clearing out these old files at this time, and have found many items with no return envelope.

☺☺☺

# PHASER-G

Questions with brief but important answers.

♦ **801G:** *The preface to D19 Passive Fire Control says that this system "does not reveal the intention to fire." Does this mean that you don't have to announce fire until the enemy does?* If it did, it would say that. It simply means that since you don't have fire control active, and your fire is less accurate, the enemy thinks that you are less likely to start shooting. This refers to peacetime encounters between unfriendly races. You might also see the story in CL7 (What Price Victory?) for a graphic example of its use for deception purposes, as well as the Ceasefire Collapse scenario in this issue. Also, watch the evening news and you will see warships in the Persian Gulf playing "lock on your fire control and scare the frigate." The frigate captain, knowing that fire control is locked onto his ship, knows that the other warship can fire immediately without further warning. This usually makes the frigate go away. Someday it may cause another, less desirable, reaction.

♦ **802G:** *Rules section R is full of comments like "...certainly no more than two or three, and possibly only one, of this class ever existed..." Should these be taken as formal rules governing a campaign and what ships the players can build?* Yes, absolutely! No! Only if you want to. Maybe. Such "semi-rules" as you noted reflect the actual historical situation, which is not necessarily fully known at the time of publication. Your campaign must decide what degree of historicity it will adhere to. Certainly, a true historical campaign would be limited by the references you mentioned. If, however, you choose to run an "anything goes" campaign, a lot of rules aren't going to apply. It is dangerous, however, to assume that we used such terms in a consistent manner with the intent of creating formal "levels" of historicity, such as we did with the Optional, Advanced, and Commander's Level rules. Use common sense (before you start to play, or even decide who plays what race), and it will all work out. We have, in Doomsday, paid a lot more attention to these off-hand comments.

♦ **803G:** *How do mines work? How are they "hidden" in open space? Most mines on Earth are hidden in some other media than the target is moving in. Men walking are moving through the area but step on mines buried in the dirt. One thing about space, it's big. Real big. Huge. With a small mine being perhaps two meters across and deployed in an area of one million square kilometers (assuming you know which hex it is in, and you usually don't), it is hidden well enough. And if you still think you can find it in an area of one million square kilometers, try looking for something that is only 2 cubic meters in a volume of 1,000,000,000,000,000,000,000 cubic meters. It's not even emitting any signals you can read as its detection system is passive (which explains why it has to roll to explode). Mines also have some limited cloak technology (M7.33).*

♦ **804G:** *What does the "NCC" in Fed ship numbers mean?* Naval Construction Contract.

♦ **805G:** *What distinguishes "variants" from "real ships" on the Master Ship Chart? Why isn't the Fed Scout in the variant column?* The variant column on the Commander's Master Ship Chart is primarily there to save space. The main section doesn't need to be any wider and can't be any narrower, so it leaves a narrow space that should be put to some good use. Putting variants there made the chart fit in 8 pages instead of 14. In Doomsday, we added several columns (notes, explosion strength, command rating, docking points) and eliminated the separate variants column.

♦ **806G:** *Since AWR is hit on "center engine" on a base, is it also hit on center engine on a ship? On a ship with no center engines?* No, AWR on ships is hit on APR. As bases don't have

engines, AWR is hit on center on those units only. On starbases, AWR is hit on APR.

♦ **807G:** *Could you arrange a tournament in my area?* Not really. Tournaments are held at conventions, and conventions are locally organized and run. There are so many conventions going on that there probably is one within driving distance at least once during any given year. You can find convention announcements in many gaming magazines. When you find a convention in your area, write them and ask them if they are going to have a Star Fleet Battles tournament. If they say no, you can run one yourself (the tournament book in CL6 provides the information you need) or try to find someone who will run one for you. You could send the tournament information to Task Force or ADB and let them ask around on the staff to see if anyone who is close to that convention would like to go and run an event. This can sometimes be arranged for larger conventions, particularly if you offer to pay travel and lodging expenses for the judge.

♦ **808G:** *I have a LOT of questions about Operation Unity (U6.0). No doubt. That campaign was rapidly outpaced by items (such as X-ships) added to the universe. We are totally revising it for Doomsday.*

♦ **809G:** *Will the unused letters in the SFB rules (I, L, O, V, and Y) ever be used?* The letters I and O will probably never be used due to their possible confusion with 1 and 0. V will, of course, be used for operational movement. Y is scheduled to be used with the Early Years module. We haven't thought of anything to use L for yet and don't feel any urgency to use up the last available letter. Who knows what we'll think of next year?

♦ **810G:** *The Kzinti Tournament ship has two separate groups of shuttle boxes, but a note saying that it has one bay. What gives?* Sometimes we divide a single shuttle bay into two groups to make the SSD work out better artistically. In such cases, we include a note to clarify the situation. If there is a note, the note is correct, otherwise there wouldn't be a note. We have made it a point to note any unusual arrangements on Doomsday SSDs.

♦ **811G:** *How can a player who does not have access to a regular hobby store keep up with new releases?* The best way is Starletter, which gives an update on new products in each issue. Beyond that, you can try calling some of the mail order dealers every now and then and ask them what's new.

♦ **812G:** *Will we ever again see 25 scenarios in a Captain's Log, as we did in the first three?* Probably not, for two reasons. First, scenarios consume an enormous amount of time and energy (for the staff), far more than just about anything else. Captain's Log died after #3 because we could not afford to do them with 25 scenarios and was reborn with #4 when we found ways to do a good issue with fewer scenarios. Secondly, the new and more diverse format of Captain's Log has many bases to cover and won't be able to divert that many of its pages to scenarios. We are considering a series of "scenario modules," but the limit on how often we can do them will depend on available staff time, not the number of scenario ideas submitted.

## QUESTIONS ABOUT DOOMSDAY

♦ **891G:** *Why isn't the Starbase SSD in the centerfold?* Actually, it is! There is a separate 16-page book of starter SSDs in the center on some copies; you are supposed to remove this.

♦ **892G:** *What are the little notches on the sides of the phaser boxes for?* Those are cross-hairs. Really, to make those numbered boxes quickly distinguishable from drone racks, probe launchers, and other numbered boxes.

♦ **893G:** *Does Doomsday have Megahex Counters or standard counters?* Standard counters. Considering the table size required, Megahex is best as an optional add-on. ☼☼☼

# COMMAND THE FUTURE!

They thought it would never happen..... *but it HAS!*  
 They said it couldn't be done ..... *but it WAS!*  
 They heard it was only a myth ..... *but it is REAL!*  
 They claimed it didn't exist ..... *but it DOES!*  
 They feared it would have Addenda..... *but it WON'T!*

## DOOMSDAY IS HERE!

*Really! No Fooling!*

After years of promises, the reality has arrived. The long-awaited Doomsday Edition of Star Fleet Battles has begun appearing on store shelves across America and around the world. In every hobby shop, in every game store, at every convention, the players can speak of nothing else.

Ok, enough hype. Yep, we did it. Doomsday is a reality.

Things are going to get pretty confusing, but we'll clear that up in this article.

The first thing you have to remember is that what has for years been called Doomsday is now the "Captain's Edition" of Star Fleet Battles. The first few thousand copies in the stores will have labels saying "Doomsday" so that players can identify it, but the official title is "Captain's Edition."

The second thing is that you can forget all of the old Volumes and Supplements and SSD books. We have a new format, which frankly makes more sense than the old one. It should; the old format just sort of happened, and the new one has been carefully planned over the last three years.

### TWO ROADS TO DOOMSDAY: PICK ONE

As each new product appears, you will be able to buy (at your store or TFG) both the product itself *or* its separate rulebook (or a package of rulebooks from several products that appear at the same time).

If you want all new SSDs and counters, buy the products.

If you just want the rules or want to save money, buy the rulebooks. If you buy the rulebooks and later wish you had bought the SSDs and counters and map and charts too, you will be able to get them in special packages.

Someone who bought the products, and someone who bought the rules and later bought the rest of the components, won't be able to tell their games apart (except maybe for the different boxes), and the price they paid will be within a few dollars at most.

### WHAT IS DOOMSDAY?

Doomsday is a new edition. We are, basically, dropping all of the previous products and issuing new versions of that material (although not always, or rather not often, in the same packages). Captain's Log and Starletter will continue as before, and the Modules (A—Battlecards, B—Terrain Maps, H—Megahex) will stay on the shelves because they were designed from the start to be part of Doomsday.

From this point, the explanation gets confusing because there are two things to explain. The first is what is in each product. The second is what order the products will appear in. The most efficient way of doing this will be to tell you what's in each product in the order that the products will appear.

The Captain's Edition will appear in five phases, with several products in each phase. Now for the bad news. As this issue goes to press, only Phase I is on the shelves, but the good news is that Phase II is following along swiftly, and the rest are not far behind.

### DOOMSDAY PHASE I: THE FOUNDATION

Phase I includes a single product: BASIC SET. The Basic Set is the foundation, the cornerstone, of the Captain's Edition. It's what a new gamer will buy first, and it's a complete self-contained space combat game.

Basic Set is more or less equivalent to the Commander's Edition Volume I. It covers the same ground, although a couple of advanced rules (G11, G12, G16) went elsewhere and a couple of basic rules (e.g. plasma shotgun and bolt) were moved here.

Something should be said about SSDs. All of the SSDs in Captain's Edition products will be the full "commanders" type, a full sheet with the charts. Even better, these have been upgraded with many new features, such as numbered phasers, boxes for hit and run damage of systems that can't be destroyed otherwise, HET and breakdown checkoff boxes, and other improvements. The new SSDs in this issue of Captain's Log are an example of this new format.

Basic Set has a 224-page rulebook, a 48-page SSD book, a 16-page "starter pack" with expendable SSDs and energy forms for your first evening's playing, a map, two sheets of counters, and a card with the various charts (energy, impulse, damage allocation). Stock #5501; price \$29.95. (Because of the delay in getting the boxes, several thousand soft-pack copies of Basic Set were sold under stock #5555.)

### PHASE II: THE REST OF THE VOLUMES

Phase II will complete the "advanced" game with the material from Commander's Volumes II and III. These products will appear (in no certain order) during the remainder of 1990.

ADVANCED MISSIONS includes most of the rules from the two later volumes. This boxed product will include a 160-page rulebook, a 160-page SSD book (with some charts), and two sheets of counters. Stock #5502, price \$29.95.

MODULE C1 NEW WORLDS I covers the Lyrans, Hydrans, and WYNs with their ships and rules. One sheet of counters, about 100 total pages of rules and SSDs. Stock #5601. \$14.95.

MODULE C2 NEW WORLDS II covers the Andromedans, ISC, and Neo-Tholians. One sheet of counters, about 100 total pages of rules and SSDs. Stock #5602. \$14.95.

CAPTAIN'S RULEBOOK: Yes, this is the one that is officially called the "Doomsday Rulebook." It includes the rulebooks to Basic Set, Advanced Missions, Module C1, and Module C2 (almost 500 pages in all!). It will appear in an attractive binder. Stock #5500. \$49.95.

**NOTE:** The following products will be available by mail. They could appear in stores if there is sufficient demand.

CAPTAIN'S SSD BOOK: All of the SSD books from Basic Set, Advanced Missions, Module C1, and Module C2 (about 300 pages in all!) for those who bought the RULEBOOK and then wanted the fancy new SSDs with the "Block 4" improvements and the various minor changes to some ships. Stock #5556.

CAPTAIN'S BINDER: This is the empty binder from the RULEBOOK for those who bought the products but want to assemble their rulebooks into an official binder. #5557.

CAPTAIN'S COUNTERS: The six countersheets from Basic Set, Advanced Missions, C1, and C2, along with a map, the Basic Set charts. Stock #5558. Some stores may not have the SSD and Counter products, but most will order them if you want them or you can buy them directly from Task Force or better mail order dealers.

CAPTAIN'S ADVANCED RULEBOOK: The binder and the rulebooks from Advanced Missions, C1, and C2, for those players who bought Basic Set or a separate Basic Set rulebook. This will be available *only* by mail from Task Force.

## PHASE III: THE SUPPLEMENTS REBORN

Sometime after Christmas you can look for this matched pair of products to appear in your stores:

**MODULE J: FIGHTERS** will have rules J5-J10, many of the carriers and escorts, various special rules that apply to fighters (such as aegis and chain reactions), and some new ships and fighters. It will have two sheets of counters, plus a rulebook and SSDs. It would be a mistake to think that this is just a rehash of Supplement #1; it's a carefully constructed package of fighters and rules. Stock #5603.

**MODULE K: FAST PATROL SHIPS** is pretty much an updated version of Supplement #3. It will have two sheets of counters, plus a rulebook and SSDs. Stock #5604.

## PHASE IV: THE SSD BOOKS BECOME MODULES

Appearing in 1991 will be four R Modules.

R1 will have generic ships and play aids.

R2 will have the Federation, Kzintis, Orions, and Andros.

R3 will have the Klingons, Lyrans, Hydrans, and WYNs.

R4 will have the Romulans, ISC, Gorns, and Tholians.

Each module will have two sheets of counters, a few pages of ship descriptions and charts, and up to 100 SSDs.

The ships will be those from Volume III, the last three SSD books, and the various new SSDs that have appeared elsewhere since then.

## PHASE V: THE FUTURE

Phase IV brings us to the end of the process of revising the Commander's Edition. Phase V will bring new material, some of which is already well on its way to print, and other items which aren't even dreamed of yet.

Scenario Modules, Sector Modules, Star Fleet Marines, Early Years, X-ships, Minor Races (C3 and C4), a new Tournament Book, and many other products are in the future.

Tell us what you want to see (first, last, sooner, later, never, whatever), and you can help us chart the course. ☺☺☺

*DOOMSDAY IS ONLY THE BEGINNING!*

# THE NEW DOOMSDAY FORMAT

The Captain's Edition rules are far better arranged and presented than any of the previous editions. Every effort has been made to make rules easier to find and understand. A few examples:

**TOP OF PAGE:** The top of each page shows the section you are in, such as D-COMBAT in white lettering within a black stripe. This black stripe is standard to all new products designed as part of the Captain's Edition (e.g. this Captain's Log).

**RULE HEADINGS:** The "Point-Zero" main heading is printed in large white type on a black block, making it quick to find the start of each new rule.

**DIVISION HEADINGS:** The one-decimal main divisions of each rule are highlighted by a white box with a heavy black border, dividing each page of rules into logical sections, making it easier to find the division you want.

**SUBDIVISION HEADINGS:** The two-decimal subdivisions of each rule each have a bold title under a blank line. This makes it much faster to find the sub-division you want.

These rules are further subdivided when necessary into three-decimal rules which have a bold rule number. They may have a non-bold title in some cases. These are directly under the subdivision as they form a complete element.

In a few cases, a fourth decimal place was needed. In these cases, the four-decimal rules are indented so that it would be clear that these were part of one of the three-decimal rules, not an equal part of the subdivision.

**EXAMPLES:** A large number of new examples have been created to help explain the rules. Some include tactical advice, and some examples are continued in later rules. The example at right, for example, is continued in the next two sections, covering reinforcement (which can block transporters) and using the transporters on the ship in 1110 to move marines from the ship in 1111 to the ship in 0911.

**ILLUSTRATIONS:** Many new illustrations have been added, and all of the old illustrations were done over. These add startling clarity to sometimes vague rules.

**SCENARIOS** all have a "graphic index" to show how many and what ships are involved. See the scenarios in this issue.

## D— COMBAT

### (D3.0) SHIELDS

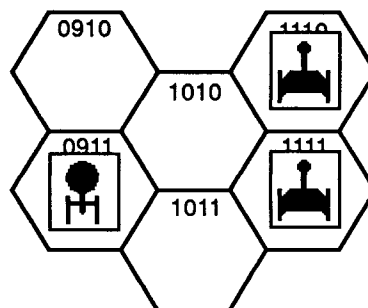
#### (D3.4) DETERMINING WHICH SHIELD WAS STRUCK BY ENEMY FIRE

**(D3.41) SHIELD BOUNDARIES:** In the event that the line from the firing unit to the target hex travels exactly along a hex side (for example, if the firing ship was in 0304 and the target was in 0202), the shield actually hit.....

**(D3.411)** In the above example of ships at 0202 and 0304, if the ship at 0304 were to move next, it is presumed to move to hex 0303, and the shield would be determined from this position, and the #3 shield would take the damage.

**(D4.3221) PHASERS:** Each third phaser hit in a given volley must be applied to the best available type, assuming that the specific phaser can be hit from that direction. See Annex #7E.

**EXAMPLE, PART I:** In the illustration below, a Federation cruiser is in hex 0911 while a Klingon D7 is in 1110 and a Klingon D6 is in 1111. The Federation ship fires photon torpedoes (overloaded with all but one point of available reserve power) at the D7, scoring two hits with overloads and some of the phasers, destroying the #5 shield. Consulting the records of the scenario, the Federation player observes that most of the marines (boarding parties) from the D7 were transported to a nearby planet earlier. The Federation player, taking advantage of the shortage of Klingon marines, wishes to board the D7 (which is almost undamaged except for the down shield) in an attempt to capture it. The Federation ship then drops its #2 shield (the one facing the Klingon D7) and applies his reserve power to the transporters in order for this to take place.





# 10 QUESTIONS ABOUT DOOMSDAY

In talking with gamers about the new edition, we have compiled the ten questions most asked and the answers to them. We hope, by listing them here, to answer most of *your* questions as efficiently as possible. If you have more questions, ask ADB or TFG (and remember to include a stamped reply envelope).

**1. When is the "Doomsday Rulebook," all of the rules in one binder, due out?** That depends on how you define "all of the rules." The Captain's Rulebook will have most of that, but a few special rules modules will remain separate so that only those who want them need to deal with them. Obviously, unless and until we print a product and say "That's the last one and now we're going out of business" it would be impossible to have "all" of the rules.

**2. What about all of the people who quit in outrage at being forced to buy all of the same stuff all over again?** We know that there will be some people who feel that way; every time any popular supergame (e.g. D&D → AD&D, Squad Leader → ASL, Traveler → Mega-Traveler) does a new edition, some gamers are pleased and others are outraged.

We have tried to minimize this by making the separate rulebooks available to ease the transition; the cost of those rulebooks will be a small price to pay for the convenience of a complete, correct, and better organized rulebook (the LAST SFB rulebook; we're finished). If you want the rest of the product later, it's available.

People get tired of even their favorite game eventually and move on to a new one; you have the advantage of moving on to a new edition of your favorite game, learning only a few new rules instead of entire new concepts.

The new products will work with the old rules, so you can continue with your present set while you see the new directions SFB will be going and decide if you want to go with us.

**3. You turkeys haven't done anything on schedule since 1979. Volume II and III were both six months later than announced. Why should I believe you when you say that "the big rulebook" will be out any time this decade?** Because when Volume I went to press Volume II didn't even exist as a complete draft. When Volume II went to press, Volume III was only an outline. We thought each would take six months; each took a year. The Phase II-IV products of Doomsday exist, today, as complete second drafts with the staff reports already done. Phase II WILL be out this year.

**4. Do we have to wait a year (while you do all of the old stuff over again) before we see some new stuff?** No, you don't. The schedule is planned to include new products between some phases of the Doomsday program. You already have a new Captain's Log between the first two phases. We have other new products planned.

**5. What can I, as a loyal SFB player, do to help make Doomsday a success?** Quite a lot, beyond just buying the product. Call your old friends who quit playing SFB years ago and show them the new game. Tell your store owner what new products you want (and their stock number) so that he can get them into stock. Play the new SFB at your game club or convention and call attention to its new features.

**6. Isn't 224 pages a lot for a new gamer to take on all at once?** It certainly is, but that just proves that SFB attracts only the brightest and best gamers. Seriously, we know that its a lot, and we've done several things to solve that problem.

For one, the 224 pages isn't all rules. It includes a lot of optional and advanced material that the new player doesn't need, and this is clearly marked. For another, many of those pages are data tables, annexes, and ship descriptions that you extract a couple of numbers from and then don't worry about until the next scenario. There are quite a few pages of scenarios, but you only play one at a time.

For another, we have a new introductory product (Star Fleet Academy) in the works. Its rulebook will be much smaller, and it will train another entire generation of gamers.

**7. Why did you repackage everything?** So that the new format would make more sense than the old one did. And, we admit, so that the wholesalers would notice and realize that it is a new edition. We hope to have cleared up the confusion here, and it didn't make things more expensive.

**8. Did the rules change much?** Less than they did between the Designer's and Commander's Editions. A special article in CL9 will list the major changes and explain why we made them. The changes were made to enhance and complete the Commander's rules, to correct long-standing problems, and to create balance. Nothing was changed just because we wanted to stir things up or hype sales or because most of the staff hate Andromedans. Here's a Bonus Answer: there won't be an "Addenda pack" to convert the old edition to the new one; it would be as big as the new rulebook!

**9. What about all of the out of print stuff? How does a new gamer get the old Logs and Nexus magazines?** We're going to combine the best of it into new products, and let the obsolete stuff vanish with dignity.

**10. The Big Question: Is there going to be an unending stream of addenda?** No, there isn't. Before you scoff in disbelief, you should know that TFG has insisted that ADB won't do any more addenda, and ADB has agreed that the whole idea of addenda was a mistake. (We honestly thought that was what you wanted. Boy, were we wrong!) So you are reasonably safe.

Any printed product will have a few mistakes, contradictions, typos, and an occasional rule that is worded poorly or is too confusing. We will fix these items as we find them, but we will NOT allow this to expand into our old habits of:

Arbitrary rules changes because someone thought that this or that rule was unfair. The days when you could campaign for rules changes (and get them) are over.

New gimmicks that require changes or additions to every other rule. If a new rule can't be done without changing previous rules, we won't publish it.

New basic concepts (such as active fire control) that have to be woven through the whole rulebook because they explain why existing rules work the way that they do.

We identified these and included them in Doomsday. There aren't any more.

## OUR DOOMSDAY PLEDGE:

We'll explain everything, but we won't *change* anything! ☺☺☺

# Could you give me an example of... TRACTOR AUCTIONS?

*by Steven Paul Petrick*

Tractor auctions are one of the most deadly games you can play with a starship. Depending on who wins the auction, one ship will die or, perhaps, just barely escape.

For the purpose of this discussion, we will limit ourselves to observation of the actions of only three ships. These ships will be a badly damaged Lyran CA, a Lyran CC, and a Kzinti BC.

During the Energy Allocation Phase of a given turn, the Lyran CA captain allocates two points to tractor and has recharged his two remaining batteries. The Kzinti BC captain, who is anticipating an attempt to tractor the Lyran CA and then launch a salvo of drones, allocates four points to tractor because he knows the Lyran has only two batteries and his BC has five batteries which are also full so that he will be able to overcome two points of negative tractor from a range of three hexes.

At this point, energy is only being allocated to tractor (or stored in the batteries). The energy is not designated as positive or negative tractor, but simply as tractor energy. It will be defined as what type it is when, and if, it is used (G7.351).

On impulse #28, the Kzinti BC reaches two hexes range, and its captain announces, in the Fire Decision Step, that he is firing. The Kzinti captain is doing this as part of his attempt to tractor the Lyran CA, hoping that the Lyran captain will expend his batteries to reinforce his shields (or that maybe a lucky hit will penetrate a shield and destroy the batteries). In this case, however, the Lyran captain is anticipating a Kzinti tractor attempt and does not burn his reserve power. Fortunately, there was no internal damage.

On impulse #29, the Kzinti BC remains within two hexes of the Lyran CA. This is as close as the Kzinti BC will get, and during the Tractor Step of the Ship Systems Function Stage, the Kzinti captain announces that he is applying a tractor beam. This requires two points of power under (G7.61), leaving the Kzinti BC with two points plus his batteries. The Kzinti captain does not have to tell the Lyran player if the energy was allocated or reserve power.

The Lyran captain, at this point [which is a tractor auction under (G7.414)], has two options. He can permit the Kzinti BC to tractor his CA, or he can expend power to break the tractor if he has it available either through allocation or in his batteries (which includes reserve power). The Lyran captain opts to attempt immediately to break the tractor under (G7.414), using one of his two points of allocated tractor power under (G7.63). He does not have to tell the Kzinti captain that this was allocated power; he can let the Kzinti captain figure that out for himself, if he can.

Once the Lyran CA captain announces that he has a point of negative tractor to break the tractor link, the Kzinti captain must decide if he wants to put in another two points, in this same Tractor Step, to maintain the tractor or allow the link to fail. The Kzinti captain decides to go ahead and use the remaining two allocated points to maintain the link. He announces that he has put another two points of power into the tractor, effectively overcoming the one point of negative tractor the Lyran CA had used to block the initial tractor attempt (G7.63) and leaving him with five points of battery and no allocated power available.

Once more the Lyran captain has the same decision to make: allow the tractor to succeed or negate it. The Lyran CA captain opts to negate it using the second point of power that he allocated for the function. This puts the ball back in the Kzinti captain's court; the Kzinti captain must decide whether or not to

continue. Determined to execute his plan [and realizing that tractor energy, unlike negative tractor, is lost if the link is broken (G7.414)], the Kzinti captain announces another two points of tractor energy have been applied, meaning the tractor link is still effective. These two points come from the batteries (although he doesn't have to say so to his opponent), leaving the Kzinti with only three points of battery power.

At this point, the Lyran CA captain remembers a term paper he read in *Nexus*, which advised tractoring your opponent when he tries to tractor you. He asks the Lyran CC captain (privately) if this would be a good idea. The CC captain says that even if it was, and in this case it isn't, tractors (like everything else) use "simultaneous fire" like weapons. If he was going to tractor the Kzinti BC, the Lyran CA captain should have announced that before announcing any negative tractor. Still thinking this is a good idea, the Lyran CA captain does not use his last reserve power, saving it to tractor the Kzinti BC on the next impulse.

The Lyran CA captain announces that he will no longer oppose the Kzinti BC's tractor attempt. Since the Lyran has not put any more energy into negative tractor, the auction for impulse #29 is at an end. Under (G7.414), the Lyran captain could reopen the auction later this turn with more power which would be added to his already operating negative tractor energy which remains in force till the end of the turn (G7.353). The Kzinti captain has retained his tractor hold on the Lyran CA and, since tractor precedes drone launch in the Sequence of Play, launches a wave of drones timed to hit the Lyran CA on the third impulse of the next turn. If the Lyran survives this, the Kzinti captain will launch more drones on impulse #5 to finish him off.

On impulse #30, the Lyran CA captain announces a tractor link is being applied to the Kzinti BC during the Tractor Step of that impulse and uses both his batteries to establish the link. The Lyran CA captain has decided to ignore the advice of the Lyran CC captain (not to tractor the Kzinti). The Kzinti captain is startled since this means that his own tractor will remain effective and that the Lyran CA captain is wasting energy. (The Kzinti captain realizes that because of the inefficiency of tractor beams at range the Lyran CA had a better chance of breaking his tractor by not wasting energy attempting to tractor him. As this is an apparent mistake, the Kzinti captain begins trying to puzzle out what the Lyran is doing.)

Both sides secretly record any energy that they will allocate to tractor and announce whether or not they will negate one another's tractor attempts, or negative tractor attempts as the case may be simultaneously under (G7.424). The Kzinti captain allocates two of his three remaining batteries to reinforce the tractor link on the Lyran CA, in case it puts up another point of negative tractor, and puts his last point of battery power into negative tractor to break the Lyran CA's tractor link. The Lyran captain has no more energy to allocate at this time, and he must announce that he did not negate the Kzinti captain's tractor or strengthen his tractor hold on the Kzinti BC. The Lyran tractor attempt of the Kzinti BC fails, and the two points of power allocated to it are lost. The Kzinti BC now has one point in negative tractor and eight points in tractor, two of which are wasted since the Lyran did not put up any negative tractor in this auction. The Kzinti captain breathes a sigh of relief as he did not have enough power remaining to overcome the two points the Lyran captain just used to try to tractor him if they had been used as negative tractor. This concludes the tractor auction for impulse #30. If either ship had any more power for tractors, further auctions could be held on impulses #31 and/or #32. Note that under (G7.354) both ships have only used one tractor beam this turn as negative tractor does not require a tractor beam.

On impulse #32, a die is rolled to determine which ship will move on that impulse. If the tractor link is maintained, and given that the ships are moving in generally the same direction, the

other ship will move the combined ships on impulse #1 of the next turn (G7.32-C-3); it does not matter to us here which ship won the roll.

During the Energy Allocation Phase, a new tractor auction must be held (G7.42). The Lyran captain announces that he will attempt to fight the Kzinti tractor beam. The Lyran captain knows he must win or the drones will hit him. If he can break the tractor, he can launch a wild weasel and perhaps survive the direct-fire weapons of the Kzinti BC due to the ECM shift the weasel will give the CA. The Kzinti captain must start the auction by announcing that he is maintaining the link: (G7.3), (G7.42), and (G7.334). The Lyran captain will then announce whether he will oppose it or not.

The Kzinti BC attempts to retain the tractor link against the first point the Lyran CA offers up, and then announces that the Lyran CA captain won the auction when he put up a second point of negative tractor. Note that in this auction none of the power used the previous turn is included in the calculation.

The power both sides put into this auction is treated as follows. The four points the Kzinti captain put in are lost under (G7.4221), while the two points the Lyran captain put up will remain effective against any other tractor attempts for the rest of the ensuing turn under (G7.4222).

While it seems that the Lyran CA will now be able to launch his wild weasel, this is actually part of a clever plan on the Kzinti captain's part. By seeming to lose the auction, the Kzinti captain has lost four points of power (G7.4221) and the use of the tractor beam for the rest of the turn (G7.13). However, the Kzinti captain has secretly placed 10 more points into tractor and recharged his batteries. What the Kzinti captain is hoping is that the Lyran captain, thinking the auction won, will allocate the rest of his power to other things, expecting the Kzinti BC to fire its weapons and launch more drones. Instead, on impulse #1, the Kzinti captain will use his second tractor beam and six points of new tractor energy (four points to overcome the two points the Lyran CA has operating, plus two more to have an effective link) to attach the second tractor. Since the tractor link lost in the preceding tractor auction in the Energy Allocation Phase was not VOLUNTARILY dropped, the Kzinti captain does not have to wait eight impulses to do this (G7.332).

The Lyran CA captain is taken by surprise and desperately (in a complete panic) tries to break this new tractor with his batteries, failing because the Kzinti captain had allocated power (and had his own batteries) to overcome this. Once more, the fact that tractor comes before launching units comes into play, and the Lyran CA cannot use its wild weasel (G7.98).

The Kzinti BC captain, however, has been so intent on his kill that he has neglected to note the arrival of the Lyran CC which has moved into three hexes range from the CA and two hexes range from the Kzinti BC. The CC captain, aware of the CA's plight, has allocated 18 points to tractors (sacrificing the arming of his weapons, principally his ESGs, since they could not help the CA) and has all four batteries available. From a range of three hexes, the Lyran CC now applies a tractor beam to the Lyran CA. The Lyran CC could have tracted the Kzinti BC, but this would not have had any effect since they are both the same size class (G7.91). To free the CA, he must break the Kzinti BC's tractor beam (G7.371). The Lyran CC will also have to overcome the negative tractor energy of the CA. From three hexes range, this will require 12 points of power, plus another 3 (G7.62) to equal the Kzinti captain's link, thus moving the auction to rule (G7.424) and requiring both ships to secretly record if they will put more power into their tractors.

The Kzinti BC's tractor will now be broken if he does not apply more power to it. The Kzinti captain, desperate to keep his prey, dumps two points of battery to maintain the link. The Lyran CC applies another three points (note that the Lyran CC does

not need to have an effective link in this case; he just needs to be able to break the Kzinti BC's link) to its tractor link, again negating the Kzinti BC's tractor.

With only three batteries left, the Kzinti captain decides not to pursue the tractor auction any further and announces that his link is broken.

The Lyran CC captain now has the option of maintaining the effective link on the Lyran CA, but if he does so, the drones will strike the CA. The Lyran CC releases its own tractor on hearing that the Kzinti BC will no longer try to hold the CA. The Lyran CA is now free to launch his weasel on impulse #2, and while the drones will do collateral damage, it will at least be to a shield of Lyran CA captain's choosing (under Doomsday rules), and the CA will survive, for now.

It must be noted here that each side is using minimal power in the auctions. Either side could have announced a larger amount of energy expended at any point in any of the auctions. But to announce four points of power to negate the initial Kzinti tractor, for example, would have used all the Lyran's available power and only two points of the Kzinti's, effectively letting the Kzinti start the next Energy Allocation Phase with full batteries, even if he did not get the tractor link. ☼☼☼

## SUDDEN IMPACT

One of the questions most frequently asked involves the case of seeking weapons fired in the same hex as their target.

The Sequence of Play clearly resolves the situation. The weapons do NOT hit immediately, but in the Movement Phase of the next impulse. The target has the subsequent Wild Weasel Step to launch a WW and the subsequent Direct-Fire Weapons Phase to fire at the weapons. Depending on relative speeds, the ship might even leave the hex on the next Movement Phase and leave the weapon to chase it.

This has always been the rule, although it was not entirely clear in the earliest edition of SFB, and it was only in Doomsday that a specific statement explaining the procedure was added in (F2.32). Some players misunderstood the rule the first time they read it and never realized that they were playing SFB incorrectly. Others found out they were using a non-existent rule, but liked the advantage it gave to seeking weapon ships and continued to use it as a house rule. Others denounced the "rules change" that outlawed sudden impact (which was never legal in the first place) and refused to accept it.

The "sudden impact" concept is devastating in combat. By using type-IV drones, even an average Kzinti Strike Cruiser with four drone racks can generate 96 points of damage which the target can do nothing whatsoever about simply by maneuvering into the target's hex. A Gorn BC can deliver a "Wiazowski" attack (*hohndret pointz uv plassmah*) without worrying about wild weasels.

"Sudden impact" can be even more devastating when combined with a common (but very unbalancing) house rule that allows a seeking weapon launched in the same hex as the target to strike any shield that the controlling player selects. There is no justification for this rule at all, but that does not reduce its popularity with Gorns and Kzintis.

Players are, of course, free to modify the rules to SFB at their discretion, assuming mutual consent. Doing so, however, can badly damage play balance and result in unsatisfied gamers. Even worse, it leaves a gamer loaded with bad habits when he gets into a convention tournament against players from outside of his group without his house rules.

Sudden impact should never be used, due to its effect on balance. Players insisting on using it should be assessed a 25% BPV penalty for each drone rack or plasma tube on their ship, and for each launch rail/tube on a fighter. ☼☼☼

# TO ASK THE QUESTION: "WHY?"

As is well known, questions beginning with "why" cannot be answered in the Question & Answer system. Such explanations take too long and aren't really necessary to resolve rules questions and get on with playing the game. We do take note, however, of the more important, frequent, and interesting questions and try to provide answers in Captain's Log.

## ABOUT THOSE ARMORED DRONES

*Back in Nexus #11 you said: "Several people suggested an armored drone that would be harder to kill. The problem is that such a drone would have to be larger (or have a smaller warhead) and slower or cost more, and when you account for all of that, it would be simpler to carry and fire two standard drones, which would accomplish the same thing." So why did you go ahead and print armored drones in Nexus #14?*

801W: The armored drones are larger and/or have smaller warheads and/or cost more and/or are slower. In almost all cases (control channels being the only exception, and those can usually be avoided by one means or another), two standard drones would be better. But players wanted armored drones, and they got them. Also, they appeared as part of an overall drone module. Many items of minor importance become worthwhile additions when made part of a larger project.

## SHORT "WHY?" QUESTIONS

802W: *Why doesn't the mobile base have phaser-IVs?* Because it is too small and fragile (remember that it is put together with velcro) to handle such large weapons.

803: *The Kzinti tug has six drone racks, but can only fire one of them per turn. Why?* These are special racks. A single launcher is sitting on top of three 'magazines' of drones.

804W: *Why don't you use 12-sided dice for the DAC?* Because we want some results to be relatively common and some to be relatively rare, and the equal probabilities of a single die could not provide that.

805W: *Why did the Kzintis waste time building FDXs when they had plenty of non-X drone ships?* Because a non-X drone ship could not keep up with a fast-moving X-squadron.

806W: *Why bother putting crew units on the SSDs?* Some people use the crew unit rules; some don't. Removing them from the SSD would force everyone to not use them, and some people want to.

807W: *How could a ship disengage by sublight evasion?* By reducing its electronic signature to the point that it might not be detected until the enemy gives up looking for it.

808W: *Don't you think by the 23rd century we'd have better torpedo guidance? Couldn't they avoid wild weasels?* If that were true, someone would be asking why decoy technology had not been improved to the point that something like the WW would be in the game.

809W: *Why can a ship that is moving at warp speed also use sublight impulse power for part of its movement?* The point of impulse power you are using is moving you inside the "warp bubble" and is a tiny part of every hex that you move.

## THEN WHY HAVE WILD WEASELS?

*If using a wild weasel is such a horrible tactical mistake, why even have them in the game?*

810W: For a number of reasons. For one, the mistake is in using them too often or when alternative defenses are available, not in using them at all. For another, you need the opportunity to do something wrong, particularly in those cases when it might be right. Tacticians note that WWs are more useful in fleet

battles, when other ships can keep the enemy from pinning you under the weasel, and when there are more seeking weapons hunting for you.

## ALIEN SHIP NAMES FOR THE FEDS

*Why is it that all Federation ships are named for things from Earth? Why don't you have names of people and places from the other planets in the Federation?*

811W: It is important to remember that the Star Fleet Universe is fictional. As we do not (as yet) have contact with any other inhabited planets, we do not know which of their heroes and provinces they would like to have honored. Rather than making up gibberish, we prefer to honor men, women, ships, and areas that are actually known and which actually deserve the honor.

We are, by the way, still accepting new ship names.

## WHO WON?

*Why do you almost never list the historical winner of an historical scenario?*

812W: Doing that is sort of a tradition in SF games, beginning with the old SPI game Battlefleet Mars. There is a reason. What would be the fun of playing it if you knew how it would turn out? But, in answer to gamer requests, we have begun listing the historical result in the Captain's Edition.

## LOOK-ALIKE BASES

*Why do all of the bases look alike? Did spies steal the obviously superior Federation design and pass it around the galaxy?*

813W: Actually, they don't look exactly alike, but the requirements of what a base should do pretty much define the form. We use a standardized design for the sake of simplicity and convenience and to avoid giving any given race an edge in its superior bases.

## ABOUT THE HELLCAT

*The description of the Lyran Hellcat BCH (R11.36) states: "...it proved impossible to upgrade weapons beyond the standard refits..." But when compared to the LDR BC (R14.2), it is short 2 disruptors (and 2 impulse). If (R11.36) is correct and that no more weapons could be applied to a standard BC, shouldn't the LDR BC have only 4 disruptors? Or should the Hellcat have 2 more disrs and 2 more impulse?*

814W: Both ships (the Lyran and LDR versions of the Hellcat BCH) are correct as shown. The LDR ship has very limited cruising range (it is always within 3 F&E hexes of its shipyard) and is able to obtain the vastly increased maintenance required by the extra equipment. This is true of many WYN and LDR ships. Adding weapons to the Lyran BCH would limit its range and turn it into a "defensive" ship (like the LDR version) rather than an offensive ship designed to carry the battle to the enemy.

## BOARDING SHUTTLES

*How can you transport marines into the cramped quarters of a shuttlecraft?*

815W: John Hammer responds: I don't have any problem with enemy BPs transporting aboard a shuttle already carrying its limit. The regular passengers, be they crew units or BPs, are strapped into their seats. The enemy materializes in the aisle between the seats or in the rear storage compartment. When beaming aboard a SS or SP shuttle, the BP probably represents only two or three individuals (a special bomb squad plus a pilot) and so do not require a vast amount of room in which to move about. ☼☼☼

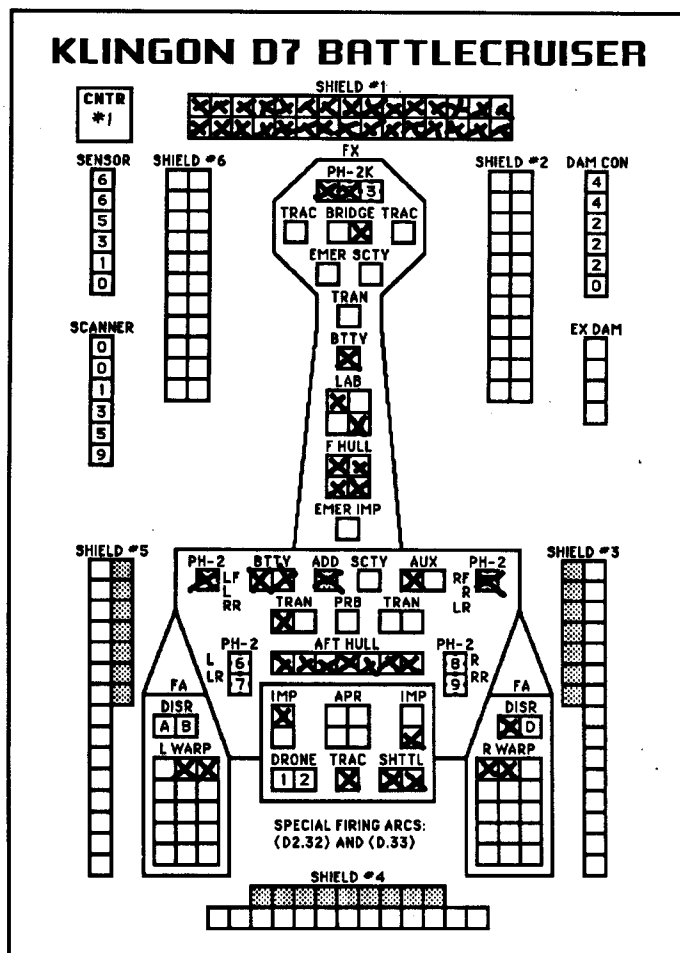
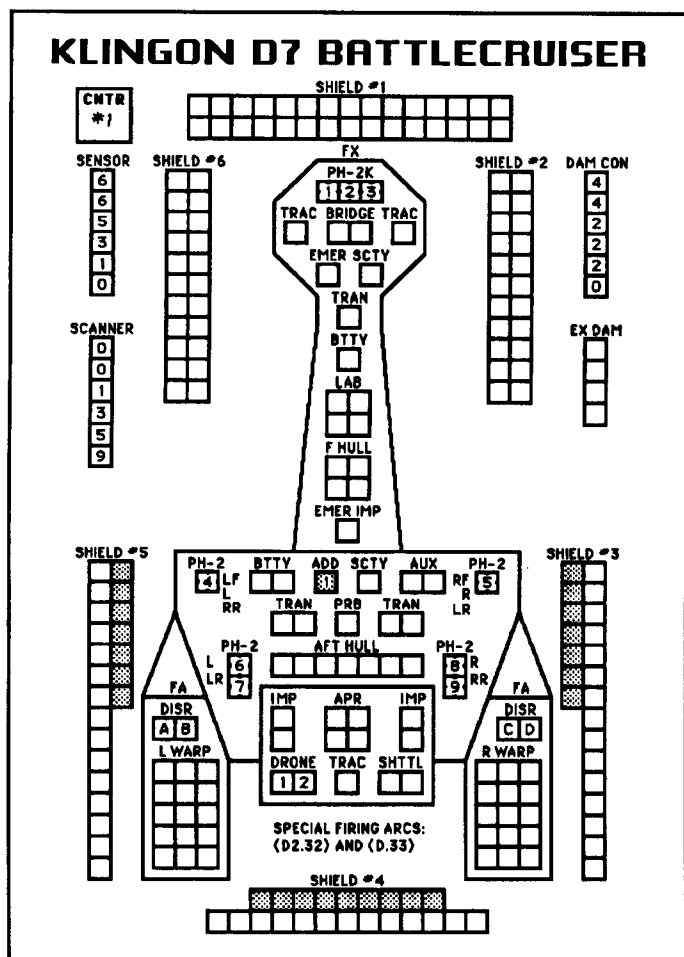
# A MESSAGE FROM THE FEDERATION HIGH COMMAND:

IT APPEARS THAT SOME OF YOU KLINGONS HAVE NOT BEEN PAYING ATTENTION.

# OK, ONE MORE TIME.

## THIS IS YOUR SHIP

## THIS IS YOUR SHIP AFTER FOUR OVERLOADED PHOTONS\*



# GET THE PICTURE?

WHEN YOU ARE ORDERED TO ATTACK THE FEDERATION,

# JUST SAY NO!

\* This demonstration is based on four overloaded photons striking the #1 shield from directly ahead. It does not include the effects of shield reinforcement by the D7 or of phaser-1s by the Federation vessel, but then we have more ph-1s than you have batteries.



# BATTLEFORCE 2000

*edited by Steven P Petrick*

The second in our series of fleets built to a specified point limit is a real powerhouse: 2000 point fleets for a starbase assault! These were designed for the starbase assault scenario (SN4.0) in Update #2 (which erroneously defines an attacking force of 1,250 points). You can, of course, use these forces against each other, although they were not designed for open field combat.

**FEDERATION** (Chuck Strong): DNG (244): drones: 7 type-IVF (+7) and 2 type-IF ECM (+2); MRS-B (+8); drones for MRS: 1 type-IVF (+1), 5 type-IF (+5), and 6 type-VIF (+3) = 270.

CC (149): drones: 1 type-IVF (+1) and 2 type-IF (+2) = 152 BPV.

CLC (143): drones: 2 type-IVF (+2), 3 type-IF (+3), and 1 type-IF ECM (+1) = 149.

Battle Tug (196) with Light Carrier Pod (+36): drones for racks: 5 type-IVF (+5), 5 type-IF (+5), and 1 type-IF ECM (+1); fighters: 11 F-18 (+88) and 1 F-18E (+10); drones for fighters: 22 type-IF (+22) and 24 type-VIF (+12) = Battle Tug total 376.

CVL (154): drones for CVL: 5 type-IF (+5), 3 type-IVF (+3), and 1 type-IF ECM (+1); fighters for CVL: 6 F-18 (+48); drones for fighters: 12 type-IF (+12) and 12 type-VIF (+6); MRS-B (+8); drones for MRS: 1 type-IVF (+1), 5 type-IF (+5), and 6 type-VIF (+3) = CVL total 246.

NSC (124): drones: 1 type-IVF (+1) and 2 type-IF (+2) = 127.

Three NCL (372): drones for each NCL: 1 type-IVF (+3) and 2 type-IF (+6) = 369.

Three DD (300): Total = 2001.

Tactics: Death by rolling thunder. Move to range 25 to make best use of your phasers; then back up to range 31 using a quick reverse. Use your fighters to protect your ships, and reload the drone racks with your ADDs if the enemy is not a plasma race. Have scatter-packs prepared to give the enemy a problem if they try to attack during your recharge cycle. You have a lot of EW support in this force, so keep the NSC out of the battle and use the GSC only when its photons and phasers might make a difference. Kill any enemy scouts that might try to support the base first; then just pound the base apart with proximity photons and long-range phaser-1 fire. This was the mission the DD was designed for.

**KLINGON** (John Berg): C8K (234) with 20 type-IF (+20), 2 type-IVF (+2), 2 type-IF ECM (+2), 3 type-IVF with 1/2 space internal armor modules (+3), and 2 type-IVF with 1 space internal armor modules (+2) = 263.

C7 (180) with 10 type-IF (+10), 3 type-IVF (+3), 2 type-IF ECM (+2), 2 type-IVF with 1/2 space internal armor modules (+2), and 1 type-IVF with 1 space internal armor (+1) = 198.

BTK (202) with two UIMs (+5 each), 20 type-IF (+20), 2 type-IVF (+2), 2 type-IF ECM (+2), 3 type-IVF with 1/2 space internal armor modules (+3), and 2 type-IVF with 1 space internal armor modules (+2) = 241.

D6PB (113) with UIM refit (+5), PF flotilla of four G-1K (38 BPV each) each with 16 type-VIF (+8 BPV per PF), G-1K Leader (50) with 16 type-VIF (+8), G-1 Scout (100) with 4 type-IF (+4) = 464.

Three D5K (115 BPV each) each with 2 type-IF (+2), 3 type-IVF (+3), 2 type-IF ECM (+2), and 1 type-IVF with one space internal armor module (+1) = 123 BPV each.

F6 (112) with 6 type-IF (+6), 1 type-IVF (+1), 2 type-IF ECM (+2), and 1 type-IVF with a 1/2 space internal armor module (+1) = 122.

F5K (84) with 1 type-IF (+1), 2 type-IVF (+2), and 1 type-IF ECM (+1) = 88.

F5MB (66) with 1 type-IF (+1), 2 type-IVF (+2), and 1 type-IF ECM (+1) = 70.

Two F5SB (88 BPV each) each with 3 type-IF (+3), 1 type-IVF (+1), and 1 type-IF ECM (+1) = 93 BPV each.

Total = 2001.

Troop Ship will join the fleet as the 13th ship. Distribute 5 BP on every ship; the rest stay on Troop ship. This force performs well vs. anyone. Note that 38 long-range DISR and 44 ph-1 average 60 points a turn at range 16-22 without UIM, 72 with UIM, and will average 119 points per turn at range 15. Note that these figures are assuming that the base does not have an ECM advantage, however.

**ROMULAN** (Stoneking): DN (246) with MRS-A (+8) = 254. Two WHR (126), with ten G-SF (+90) = 216. Two Sn-E (156). SER (113). FALR (91). Two KE (280) each with an MRS-A (+16) = 296. Three WER (309). L-AxPFT (130) with PF flotilla of four Centurions (+176), Centurion Scout (+100), and Centurion leader (+50) = 456. 27 T-bombs (+108) spread through the fleet. Marines spread through the fleet.

Fleet tactics are essentially to close to range 20 and continue launching enveloping R torpedoes until the base runs out of wild weasels and goes down. Fighters and PFs principally serve to prevent the enemy defense forces from trying to close while the fleet reloads the main weapons, preferably under cloak. AuxPFT should stay well back and provide what EW support it can and otherwise simply function as a base for the PFs.

**KZINTI** (Tony Zbaraschuk): SCS (227): drones for SCS: 11 type-IVF (+11), 2 type-IVF with a one space internal armor module and a one space explosive module (+2), 2 type-IVF with a one space internal armor module and an ECM module (+2), 1 type-IVF with 1 and 1/2 spaces of internal armor module and a 1/2 space explosive module (+1), and 2 type-IIIMWF (+10); Fighter Squadron: 11 TADS (+121) and 1 TADS-E (+11); drones for fighters: 22 type-IF (+22), 24 type-VIF (+12), and 22 type-IIIMWF (+110); Needle flotilla: 4 Needles (+148), Needle Leader (+50), and Needle Scout (+100); drones for Standard Needles and Leader Needle: 10 type-IVF (+10), 5 type-I ECMF (+5), 5 type-IVF with a one space internal armor module and a one space explosive module (+5), and 5 type-IF (+5); drones for PF Scout: 1 type-IVF (+1), 1 type-IF (+1), and 1 type-IF ECM (+1). Total for SCS = 855.

MAC (111): drones: 2 type-IMWF (+9), 1 type-IF ECM (+1), 4 type-IVF (+4), 1 type-IF with a 1/2 space internal armor module and a 1/2 space explosive module (+1), remaining spaces filled with ADD; fighter ready racks: 4 type-IF (+4), 4 type-VIF (+2), and 4 type-IIIF with a 1/2 space internal armor module and a 1/2 space explosive module (+5) = 137.

Two DWA (180): drones for each: 2 type-IMWF (+18), 1 type-IF ECM (+2), 2 type-IF (+4), 3 type-IVF (+6), 1 type-IF with a 1/2 space internal armor module and a 1/2 space explosive module (+2), remaining spaces filled with ADD; fighter ready racks: 4 type-IF (+8), 4 type-VIF (+4), and 4 type-IIIF with a 1/2 space internal armor module and a 1/2 space explosive module (+10) = 234.

BCH (180): drones: 8 type-IVF (+8), 3 type-IF (+3), 1 type-IF ECM (+1), 2 type-IMWF (+9), 1 type-IV with a one space internal armor module and a one space explosive module (+1), and 1 type-IVF with 1 and 1/2 internal armor modules and a 1/2 space explosive module (+1) = 203.

CD (128): drones: 10 type-IVF (+11), 1 type-IF (+1), 1 type-IF ECM (+1), 3 type-IV with a one space internal armor module and a one space explosive module (+3), and 1 type-IVF with 1

and 1/2 internal armor modules and a 1/2 space explosive module (+1) = 145.

CC (139): drones: 7 type-IVF (+7), 1 type-IF (+1), 1 type-IF ECM (+1), 1 type-IV with a one space internal armor module and a one space explosive module (+1), and 1 type-IVF with 1 and 1/2 internal armor modules and a 1/2 space explosive module (+1) = 150.

DWS (92): drones: 7 type-IVF (+7), 1 type-IF (+1), 1 type-IF ECM (+1), and 2 type-IV with a one space internal armor module and a one space explosive module (+2) = 103. DWL (101): drones: 7 type-IVF (+7), 1 type-IF (+1), 1 type-IF ECM (+1), 2 type-IV with a one space internal armor module and a one space explosive module (+2) = 112.

MS (47): drones: 2 type-IVF (+2) and 4 type-IF (+4) = 53. Two T-bombs (+4). Total = 2000.

The Troop Ship will accompany the fleet with its BPs distributed among the ships while it serves as a dummy. This fleet should do well against most races. Hydrans and LDR, though, are nearly drone-proof (we increase armored drone loads); Tholian web would be annoying. Plasma races are cat food. Lyrans are not invulnerable (our drones can smash even a SB's ESGs, though we'd take more armored drones). Against Klingons or Feds, we'd take ADDs in the G-racks and buy more T-bombs and MW drones. Note that I do not have many special drones; this is to allow me to get as many ships as possible. The fleet has 8 range-40, 4 range-30, and 4 range-22 disruptors, but it can launch 80+drones a turn (counting fighters). Our plan is to close as quickly as possible and blow the starbase into space dust with our heavy drones. We may use H&R raids or Marines to destroy his shuttle bays and prevent WW launch.

**GORNS** (Robert Boyette): DNF (229). BCH (192). Three BC (480). CM (152). Two CS (304).

PFT (70) with standard PF flotilla of four Pterodactyls (+160), one Pterodactyl scout (+100), and one Pterodactyl leader (+50) = 380.

Minesweeper (55).

Two BDS (190).

Five T-bombs (+20). Total = 2,002.

The Marines are spread throughout the force, and the Troop Freighter is not used. The T-bombs can be given to any ship at the player's option. Note that the MS does NOT have any mines unless it receives some of the T-bombs. The major purpose of the PFs is to simply provide defense from fighter/drone attacks.

**THOLIAN** (Tom Carroll): NDN (240) with MRS (+8) = 248. CA (128) with MRS (+8), mech link refit (+1), and one web anchor (+10) on mech link = 147.

CVA (141) with MRS (+8), 11 Spider-II (+99), 11 Spider-III (+66), and 2 Spider-E (+22) = 328. Two PCA (154). CWS (130).

Two CWP (252) each with AWR refit (+8) = 260. CW (126 BPV) with mech link refit (+1) and 1 web anchor (+10) on mech link = 137.

LTT (90) with battle pack (+20) = 110.

PFT (70) with PF flotilla of 2 standard Arachnid (+76), 2 Arachnid-W (+76) with snare refits (+12), Arachnid leader (+50), and Arachnid scout (+100) = 284.

DD (80).

Four T-bombs (+16) spread through the fleet.

Player has the option of taking boarding parties off the small troopship and spreading them among the other ships and placing the Troop Ship with the other freighters or leaving it as part of the fleet (i.e. the 13th ship).

**HYDRAN HELLBORE** (Steve Petrick): DN (200) with 9 Stinger-2 (+90), 2 Stinger-H (+20), and a Stinger-E (+11) = 321. Four Tartar (500) each with 2 Stinger-2 (+80) = 580.

Traveler (117). Four Knight (360). NSC (139) with 6 Stinger-2 (+60) = 199.

PFT (75) with 2 Stinger-2 (+20) and a PF flotilla of 4 Hellion (+168), PF Scout (+100), and Hellion PF leader (+50) = 413. Three T-bombs (+12). Total = 2002.

This force depends on closing to about range 22 and firing direct-fire hellbores to score initial damage on a shield or two, then switching to enveloping hellbores to gradually wear the base away. The 28 fighters and PF flotilla will serve to deter any attempt by the enemy to counterattack, and massed gatlings (24 on the ships, 12 on the PFs, and 28 on the fighters) will deal with any drone (or plasma torpedoes) sent against the fleet. If the fleet can reach range 1, it has enough total firepower to wreck the base in a single turn (averaging more than 1,000 points of damage at that range).

**LYRAN** (Steve Petrick): DN (228) with mech link refit (+6) and PF flotilla of four Bobcat-D (+136), Bobcat Scout (+100), and Bobcat-D Leader (+50) = 520.

STT (162). CWL (141). Three CW (387) each with mech link refit (+6) and 2 Bobcat-D (+204) = 597.

DWL (115). Three DW (315). CWS (146). One T-bomb (+4) to be placed on any ship. Total = 2000.

All ships have power pack, UIM, and +refits as appropriate. Only the DN has the phaser refit, and mech link refits are as noted. As there are only a total of 12 ships including the casual PF flotilla, the Troop Freighter can be used as a dummy to go with the suicide freighters. The Marines should be spread between the ships as the commander thinks appropriate. Basically, use the mauler to first breach the minefield, using its batteries and ESGs to take damage while creating a swept channel. After that, just go in with full overloads and overrun the starbase with direct firepower and ESGs. It should be over fairly quickly.

**INTER-STELLAR CONCORDIUM** (Tom Carroll): DN (280) with an MRS-B (+8) = 288. Two CAs (370) each with an MRS-B (+16) = 386.

CVS (176) with an MRS-A (+8), 8 FSF (+88), and 4 FTF (+32) = 304.

CL (145). CEA (145). HSC (170). DDL (110). Three DD (276). DEA (100). 19 T-bombs (+76). Total = 2,000.

Remove BPs from Troop Ship and spread them among the fleet. This fleet has 8 PPDs, 6 Ss, and 2 Gs as its heavy weapons. The basic tactic is to have the core ships sit at range 20 and pound the base with 8 PPDs every other turn and 6 enveloping Ss every three turns (spread them out!). The PPDs should average about 26-52-26 every other turn, and each enveloping S will hit the base at the 30-point strength level (6 Ss mean 180 points of plasma every three turns!). All other weapons and ships will be used to stop fighters, drones, and enemy ships which get too near. No ship should be closer than range 18 and the Heavy Scout should be at range 31 - 35 from the starbase where it can safely lend ECM/ECCM to the fleet (mainly the 4 PPD armed ships)

**NOTE:** As this issue of Captain's Log goes to press, the ADB staff are furiously completing the Captain's Edition of SFB. There could be minor changes in the BPVs of some units and equipment. Confirm the costs listed above with the latest data you have available before starting the scenario. To conserve space, the BPVs given include the refits for the ships as specified above (which include, except as noted, all those available for the year of the scenario, Y180).

# DECISIONS

## OF THE STAR FLEET UNIVERSE

### BOARD OF PROPOSALS

Every week, if not every day, Amarillo Design Bureau receives proposals for additions or changes to the Star Fleet Battles game system. Most of these are rejected for various reasons. In the past, no one really knew about a rejected proposal except the person who sent it in (unless it managed to get to a staff vote, in which case only the staff knew about it). Only in rare cases was a proposal made public and then rejected, and only then did the public know about it.

After a recent review of our office procedures, we decided to change this and publish, in each issue of Captain's Log, a list of some of the more interesting proposals received in the previous months, together with the reason why they were rejected. It was felt that this would accomplish several purposes. It would show everyone else what we had decided not to do and avoid wasting your time and ours with numerous independent but identical proposals. It would give players an insight into how those who design and manage the Star Fleet Universe view it.

Most importantly, it would recognize those who had gone to the effort to make proposals. In most cases, the names are listed. This is not done to hold the proposing player up for ridicule or criticism, but to recognize his efforts (albeit unsuccessful) to add something to the game.

*It is better to have proposed and been rejected than to have never proposed at all.*

Before anyone asks, we cannot give you a copy of the original proposal or put you in contact with the person who made it. Doing either would require extensive records and office staff time that are better spent on proposals still under consideration. Regretfully, inquiries into the details of the proposals cannot be answered for the same reason.

**DOUBLE SHIELDING (801B):** Brian Baum of New Jersey proposed a system by which a ship could double its shield boxes by paying triple the energy cost, at the penalty of being at minimum shields on the next turn. This was rejected for the following reasons:

1. It would cause a radical change in tactics.
2. Too many ships can afford to do it.
3. Would be a suicide move as the ship would effectively be unshielded on the next turn.

**DESIGN LIMITS (802B):** One player suggested allowing ships to exceed their design limitations. He noted that he had been in a few spots where a bit more acceleration would have made all the difference in the world. He suggested that there would be dire dangers involved but that sometimes a player would be willing to take the risk. After much thought, we decided against it. Various special rules have been proposed over the years to allow you to violate or exceed various other rules with a die roll to see if you blew up or broke down when you tried it. We have, by and large, rejected all of them because they tend to turn the game into a crap shoot where luck with die rolls replaces tactical skill and knowledge.

**HEADS, HE BLOWS UP (803B):** Geoff Pinello suggested that there might be a die roll to see if a ship really explodes. This was rejected because it would "turn the game into a crapshoot" where one arbitrary decision not under control of the players could decide the outcome.

**GENERAL DECELERATION LIMIT (804B):** Several players had suggested a general deceleration limit that would apply between turns (i.e. if you were going speed X at the end of turn 2, you MUST go at least speed Y for the first part of turn 3). This was rejected because it put too many limitations on damaged ships and would have, in effect, forced them to disengage because to fly at the minimum required speed would have left them without enough power to effectively continue the battle.

**AUXILIARY STASIS SHIP (805B):** RM proposed a Klingon auxiliary ship equipped with an SFG, suggesting that it would be sort of like a web tender. Unfortunately, this doesn't work. The Tholian web tender doesn't carry "special technology;" it only has standard equipment for the owning fleet. SFGs are simply too rare to waste one on a ship that is too slow to get anywhere interesting and too easily destroyed. As for local defense, may we suggesting putting the SFG on a starbase?

**SMOKE ON THE WATER (806B):** Keith Velleux suggested that ships might lay "smoke" (rows of chaff pods?) that would interfere with enemy sensors. This was rejected for two reasons. First, no one believed that such a wall of jamming could actually be built.

Second, if it could, the map would get really messy.

**ESG FADE (807B):** Gregg Dieckhaus proposed that the Lyrans ESG should not disappear instantly when the generator was hit, but should "fade out" over the next four impulses so that the ship would not lose its drone defenses all at once. After an extensive debate, this was rejected because:

1. Recent changes to the Lyrans (power packs, ESG rules changes, etc.) had already solved all of their problems.
2. This would be used in a "ramming" situation, taking an enemy alpha strike (that destroyed ESGs) and still be able to flatten just about any ship it hit.
3. It caused a number of complications in the rules such as: What if the generator was hit before the sphere formed? Keeping track of the fading sphere and its strength (modified by impacts during that time) would be complicated. Would hellbore and mine feedback still work? Would the sphere continue moving with a ship that was no longer generating it? And, of course, what happens if the Lyrans ship voluntarily turns the sphere off (when they really really want it to go down right away so they can launch fighters)?

**BUBBLE WEB (808B):** Tholian Commander Tom Carroll suggested that a very small globular web (deemed a "bubble web") might be useful. This would create small terrain features in which Tholians could hide. It was finally rejected because it would be too small for a Tholian to actually hide in. If it were possible, then a Tholian could hide inside any web hex, including for example one hex of a linear web.

**PHOTON DETONATION (809B):** This proposal by Tony Vikotka would have allowed photons to be fired in one turn with a reduced warhead. This was rejected because it would ruin the flavor of the photon if the warhead was half of the normal strength and would be useless if it was any less.

**AND LEST YOU THINK WE REJECT EVERYTHING** here is a short list of some recently accepted proposals:

- Stacy Bartley's Jericho Project (to damage webs).
- Marc Cocherl's WYN radiation zone revisions requiring post-combat resolution of the fates of crippled ships.
- Scott Wochholz's proposed changes to super novae.
- Mike Haut's changes to ship explosions.

☼☼☼

# Ask Kommodore Ketrick

This is our Rules Questions Department, with answers provided by Steven Paul Patrick, ADB's Chief of Staff. Interesting questions received by ADB are selected for this column to help explain some of the more obscure or complex rules.

**TRACTOR ROTATIONS (801Q):** Can a drone, suicide shuttle, or freighter be tractor rotated into the hex of its target so it can be fired upon at range zero?

**A:** In general the answer is "yes and no." If the target of the seeking weapon is ever in the same hex as the seeking weapon, then (F2.312) comes into effect and the seeking weapon is regarded to have hit the target. This applies whether the target rotated the seeking weapon into its own hex or another, presumably friendly, unit rotated the seeking weapon into the hex with its target. Note that as tractor rotations occur during energy allocation before all other movement and fires, and ONLY seeking weapons can move on the first impulse (speed 32 being attainable only by these units and some Space Dragons), a seeking weapon rotated into the hex with its target will strike the target during the movement portion of impulse 1 whether it was scheduled to move or not.

**ROMULAN MINES (802Q):** Rule (M2.7) refers to the three generations of Romulan ship design and their ability to carry an NSM, but it is unclear on the third generation Centurion and StarHawk PF designs?

**A:** PFs are covered by the PF rules [(K1.53), (K4.3), (M3.13), and (R1.84)]; i.e. the leader has one T-bomb, the other five PFs none) and are not "third generation Romulan ships" for any purpose. At the time (M2.7) was written, it included the ChickenHawk in the list, which was a PF tender, causing some confusion. The rule is a specific "enabling" rule. If it is not listed, it can not have an NSM under this rule. (Note that the FireHawk hullform will be added to this list along with the SeaHawk Hullform.)

**INACTIVE MINES (803Q):** Can a mine be laid with its automatic sensors down so that it could not be detected, would be active immediately, and could then detonate by interaction with an ESG field and blow the Lyran player's mind?

**A:** Yes, you can lay a mine with no size classes set, but the mine will still have to become active (i.e. the laying ship must move out of the blast range and/or the time delay for T-bombs must pass) or it will not detonate when hit by an ESG.

**SEEKING MINE TARGETS (804Q):** Would an automatic explosive mine detonate if it is set for a drone or suicide shuttle which enters its detection range and immediately strikes its target?

**A:** The Sequence of Play (Annex #2A) governs this case (and just about all others). As the weapons hit before mines explode, the weapon would hit first. However, its movement would still cause the mine to detonate as that detonation was triggered by the movement itself. The same thing would apply if a unit that had entered a hex and triggered a mine was destroyed by a seeking weapon before the mine detonated. Note also that this means a seeking weapon strikes a target in an asteroid hex before either the seeking weapon or the target roll for possible asteroid damage.

**CLEARING ASTEROIDS (805Q):** Can T-bombs or other mines detonated in or adjacent to asteroid hexes provide "permanent" defensive fire (P3.25) for units that enter these hexes?

**A:** No. The operative word is "fire." Mines are not fired; seeking weapons are, of course, also not fired but are covered under (P3.352). Mines can NOT be used to clear paths through asteroids at all. Their effect would be too gross, affecting too many rocks causing them to strike too many other rocks with the result that a lot of stone will ricochet right back into the "hole." Also, the fire must be FRIENDLY to clear a path, and mines, once laid, are NOBODY's friends. Weapons fire or seeking weapons launch represents a precise computer calculated shot to deflect debris from a computer selected course.

**CARGO TRANSFER (806Q):** How long must transferred cargo, usually ammunition, remain unusable before it can be deployed? For example, a small mine is transported to an empty MLS...or drones shuttled to another ship?

**A:** The operative rule here is (G25.3) which states "Transferred ordnance is placed in storage; it can be moved to the weapon/rack from storage but can't be placed there directly." This establishes a two-turn system. Turn 1 you receive it. Turn 2 you place it in your storage area. Turn 3 it would be available. It can be assumed that what is actually happening is that the mine or drone was being unpacked from its shipping container, final assembly was done, and a system check done to make sure it was ready for use. Note specifically that this system PROHIBITS using transporters to beam mines onto an MLS/MRS as those units do NOT have storage areas and can NOT ready a mine for use OR load it into their onboard mine rack. This must be accomplished by a deck crew.

**807Q:** Could I transfer spare UIM modules?

**A:** No, UIMs are not replacement modules but backup units already "plugged in." When one UIM burns out, you don't replace it. You simply switch to the backup unit. These units cannot be transferred to another ship during a scenario (whether the receiving ship had a UIM or not). It could be theoretically possible that some scenario might involve a shipment of inactive UIM modules, in which case they would be handled as "victory point objects" and could be transferred as cargo but not installed.

**EXPANDING SPHERE GENERATORS (808Q):** What is the status of the cloak if the ship, presumably an Orion, is operating an ESG?

**A:** Rule (G13.57) says that the ship cannot operate a cloak and an ESG at the same time.

**809Q:** If an ESG enters the hex of a PF survival pod, is the pod destroyed, how much is the ESG reduced, and may PFs drop these pods unmanned?

**A:** The survival pods are destroyed, the ESG is damaged by 6 points since (K1.94) states that it is treated as a large mine for this purpose. The pods cannot be dropped separately because they comprise structural sections of the PF and the PF is dismantled in releasing the pod.

**810Q:** If an ESG with a capacitor is destroyed and is partially repaired to the non-capacitor state, can I later repair the capacitor for the other five points?

**A:** No, this is illegal. This comes under (G17.54). The key phrase that makes this so is (G23.241). The capacitor is not a separate system from the ESG; when it is added, they are a combined whole. If you do partial repairs on the ESG to fix the ESG, you cannot fix the capacitor unless that ESG is destroyed again and you accumulate the 15 points to repair it, beginning the turn after it was destroyed the second time.

**PFL SHUTTLES (811Q):** If the shuttle of a PF leader is armed as a wild weasel, what conditions and restrictions are the rest of the PF flotilla and/or PFT under?

**A:** As (K4.1) only permits a PFL to hold a scatter-pack in its mech link, and specifically excludes suicide shuttles, and (J1.53) dealing with the somewhat similar balcony and track system specifically allows scatter-packs to be held but forbids suicide shuttles and wild weasels, wild weasels can NOT be held by PFLs (or armed by them). See also (J1.562).

**VOLUNTARY DESTRUCTION (812Q):** Would it be allowed for a plasma torpedo launcher loaded with a type-R, and/or enveloping, and/or shotgun load (none of which could normally be held), to be voluntarily destroyed so as to be able to fire them early the next turn or to add to the base damage of a self-destruction blast?

**A:** No, you cannot voluntarily destroy a torpedo launcher, and rules changes in the Fall of 1989 eliminated plasma torpedoes (and many other factors) from the self-destruction calculation.

**COMMANDO TENDENCIES (813Q):** There are several races whose philosophies would make training and deploying commando-type boarding parties commonplace if not imperative. Will commandoes be deployed more generally, perhaps assumed in the BPV of certain races and/or types of ships?

**A:** Commandoes can be purchased as replacements for standard marines (or as extras) under the Commander's Option Package, but are not deployed on non-troopships by rule. There is no chance of their becoming assumed in the BPVs of certain races. One player might claim that the Gorns are large but slow and hence should have many heavy weapons units but no commandoes. Another player could argue that Gorns, being fearsome in hand-to-hand combat, would all be treated as commandoes.

**WHEN WILL MY BOMB BE READY? (814Q):** If I transport a T-bomb on impulse 15, during what impulse does it become active?

**A:** The T-bomb becomes active during the transporter Activity Step of impulse 17, which is the second subsequent impulse after you transported it out. Since nothing can move during that step, the soonest it could explode would be during the movement segment of impulse 18.

**GIVE ME SOME GUIDANCE (815Q):** Can launcher guided drones (FD5.3) be distracted by a wild weasel?

**A:** Yes, all drones and other seeking weapons, with the SOLE exception of a type VI drone (FD5.13) which has gained its own lock-on to the target before the wild weasel is launched, are distracted by it. The type VI drone is the ONLY drone which will not be distracted.

**ORION OPTIONS (816Q):** Can the drone racks on some Orion ships be treated as option mounts (G15.0) and replaced with other systems?

**A:** No, only those systems specifically shown as option mounts can be used as option mounts. Note, however, the introduction of the "D" plasma torpedo and the "plasma rack" created a LIMITED exception in that Pirate ships operating in plasma space could convert their drone racks to plasma racks, but NOT back to drone racks.

**817Q:** Can rule (S3.0) be used to exchange some systems for additional option mounts? Can rule (S3.0) be used to add additional option mounts to an Orion ship, and what would be the cost to do so?

**A:** No, and this rule has been so badly abused that it has been suspended pending a review and a rewrite.

**FRANTICALLY SEEKING UIMs (818Q):** Can the Orions be considered to begin a (U1.121) campaign with at least one UIM?

**A:** No, the Orions must be able to show where each system has been captured in any campaign. Allowing them to start with one restricted technology system opens the way for others. Why not start with a SWACS? An SFG? A cloaked decoy? Andromedan or Tholian technology? While this will NOT be sanctioned by SFB and Amarillo Design Bureau, you are of course free to make your own decisions. However, please do not refer any complaints of abuses that may result to ADB.

**819Q:** I am confused by the UIM rules. Can these be used for photons and phasers? Does this mean that the Feds have UIMs?

**A:** Everyone is confused by that rule. The original comments on using photons and phasers referred to the original Klingon X-ship, which had photons. That ship no longer has photons, and the comments about using UIMs to fire phasers and photons were cancelled in addenda ages ago, although they are apparently still causing no end of confusion. This was deleted from Doomsday.

**RACK 'EM UP! (820Q):** Can a vessel armed with two plasma racks fire both on one turn, one on seeking mode and the other in bolt mode?

**A:** Yes. Note specifically the special comment (FP10.24) is to limit the use of "bolted" plasma-Ds. There is no restriction, save that of (FP10.211), to launching seeking plasma-D torps in offensive mode. See Rules Update Two.

**821Q:** Can a plasma torpedo and a plasma rack both fire a bolt during the same turn?

**A:** Yes. The limit of one "D" bolt only applies to the plasma rack; a ship [PFs are under a separate special restriction; see (FP8.26)] is not specifically restricted from salvaging its entire load of standard torpedoes, plus one "D" in a single Impulse or over multiple Impulses, either on the same turn or over multiple turns. See, however, (FP6.2) and (FP7.23) for some specific restrictions that are created by the use of these two special considerations.

**822Q:** Can a plasma rack be fired on each consecutive turn if all of the plasma-Ds on the rack are activated?

**A:** Rule (FP10.211) of Rules Update Two (and Doomsday) specifically allows this to be done.

**ELECTRONIC WARFARE ALTERNATIVES (823Q):** My group does not normally use electronic warfare per se, but does express terrain effects and erratic maneuvering in terms of ECM points. Under these circumstances, should Orion ships get their +2 ECM stealth bonus, in effect giving a +1 die roll shift for ships firing on them?

**A:** Yes, Orions should get a +1 versus direct-fire weapons fired at them. Non-plasma or non-ATG/type-III drone seeking weapons should be treated as having a 1/6th chance to do only 50% of their warhead yield when striking an Orion ship.

**824Q:** For purposes of retaining lock-on to cloaking ship, should ATG drones and plasma torpedoes retain their ECCM bonus?

**A:** Yes, plasma torpedoes and ATG/type-III drones should retain their ECCM bonuses. This is, however, under review at this time. If it is changed, the change will be in doomsday and will not be announced previously. (We want players to face all of the changes at once, rather than lots of little ones over a year.)

**825Q:** Should wild weasels still have six points of ECM?

**A:** Yes, this is treated without EW by adding 2 to any direct fire die rolls against a unit protected by an active weasel.

*Answers by Steven Paul Petrick except as noted.* ☼☼☼



## WARTIME STARSHIP MISSIONS

In wartime, the ships operating in a given sector are each assigned to various missions. A list of these missions, together with a brief description, is given here.

**PATROL:** The most common type of mission. Single ships (sometimes pairs; rarely three-ship squadrons which are known as Combat Patrols) move back and forth along the front line to prevent the enemy from slipping through it to raid rear areas. Patrols from both sides frequently encounter each other, and the most common type of combat is the small battles between opposing patrol elements.

**INFILTRATION:** Usually assigned to one or two ships. Their mission is to slip past the enemy patrols and attack weak units (such as convoys) in the immediate rear of the battle front. The destruction of these rear-area targets weakens the front-line forces and could cause them to withdraw from the sector. Rather than do that, most fleets will divert forces to Patrol, Escort, and Picket missions to reduce the number of infiltrators.

**ESCORT:** Provide protection for convoys, auxiliary ships, crippled ships, or other valuable and vulnerable units. In most cases an escort will consist of 1-3 ships, and these will be the smaller types (FF, DW). The purpose of an escort is to provide protection against any small threats and, thereby, force the enemy to concentrate his forces against fewer targets or commit heavier units to raids.

**RAID:** Similar to an Infiltration, but often involves several independent ships and is facilitated by a Breakthrough.

**DEFENSE:** Similar to Escort, but the ships are assigned to fixed positions (planets, bases, terrain features). If the planet is important, many ships might be assigned to it.

**PICKET:** Similar to Patrol or Defense, but the ships are assigned to specific positions to watch for enemy infiltrators.

**BREAKTHROUGH:** A concerted effort by a sizeable fleet to penetrate the enemy Patrol and Picket forces, allowing a Raid or Assault group to cross the front line.

**ASSAULT:** A determined effort to destroy, damage, or otherwise neutralize a fixed position, such as a planet or base.

**OPERATIONS:** A combination of several large Assaults and Breakthroughs over a period of 6-18 months intended to achieve a major readjustment of the galacto-strategic situation.

**MAIN EFFORT:** The largest Assault currently being conducted within the sector.

**MAJOR EFFORT:** A particularly large Assault or Breakthrough against a well-defended target or sector.

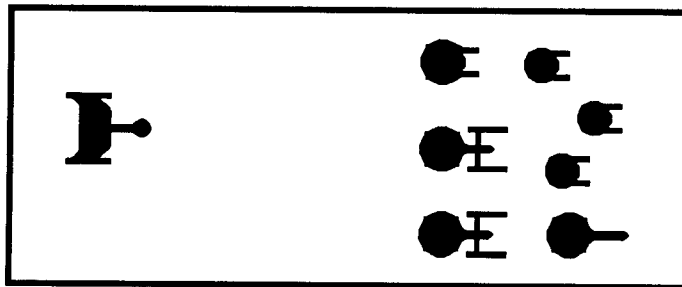
**RECONNAISSANCE IN FORCE:** Perhaps the most fascinating of wartime missions. A squadron of 4-8 ships is sent into an area with the object of finding and destroying enemy forces. The targets of a RIF could include Patrol, Picket, and Escort forces as well as convoys. A RIF could easily be turned into a Raid or even a Breakthrough if the commander on the scene detects an opportunity to do so.

**REACTION FORCE:** A group of ships kept within a given area, generally out of the immediate combat zone, which the sector commander can use to react to any enemy force which attempts to enter, penetrate, or operate in his sector. This force will usually be formed informally from ships that just returned from or are preparing to go on patrol.

**REPAIR, REFIT, SHAKEDOWN:** Some ships are always undergoing repair of previous damage, refits with new technology, and shakedown/training operations to integrate new systems or crew members.

**RESERVE:** This mission is usually assigned by a higher HQ. A group of ships will be kept clear of all other operational concerns in order to be used to reinforce a successful Assault, exploit a Breakthrough, reinforce a threatened sector, or counterattack to seal a breach in the main combat zone.

## (SL112.0) RECON IN FORCE



(Y175)

by Ardak Kumerian, Klinshai

A reconnaissance-in-force mission is, in the purest sense, a group of ships looking for trouble. The RIF is sent into an area known to contain enemy forces (defensive patrols and escorted convoys) which are not specifically located. The RIF is directed to locate whatever enemy forces it can and to destroy whatever enemy forces it locates.

A RIF squadron is usually formed from a cruiser squadron reinforced with an escort carrier (or a carrier group reinforced with some cruisers or destroyers). The flagship is usually a command cruiser, heavy cruiser, war cruiser leader, or carrier. The squadron will almost always include a scout and may include other support units, such as drone ships or specialist combat types. PF tenders often replaced the carriers in late-war squadrons, or the ships would each carry a few PFs on mech links. It would be very unusual for commando, minesweeper, or mauler ships to be sent with a RIF squadron as those key units are assigned only when a specific target vulnerable to their particular form of attack is known in advance.

The general course of a RIF action is for the squadron to move through the sector until it detects an enemy unit. This unit is immediately attacked and quite probably destroyed, but not before it notifies the enemy sector command of the presence of the RIF squadron. Any enemy warships in the sector then head for the point of contact and attempt to destroy the RIF squadron before it can break contact.

**(SL112.1) NUMBER OF PLAYERS:** 2; the RIF player and the defending player.

### (SL112.2) INITIAL SET UP

**RIF PLAYER:** The RIF player selects his race and uses one of the forces listed for that race below. This force is placed within 6 hexes of hex 3522, heading F, speed max, WS-II.

**FEDERATION A:** CC, CAR, NCL, DD, FFV (6 x F-18s), FFE, FFS.

**FEDERATION B:** CVS (12 x F-18s), DE, FFE, NCL, DD, FFG, NSC.

**KLINGON A:** D7L, D7B, D5, F5B, F5V (8 x Z-Vs), E4EB, F5SB.

**KLINGON B:** D5L, D5, D5V (12 x Z-Ys), D5E, F5E, D5S.

**ROMULAN A:** NH, FH, SPA, SKB (4 x G-SFs + 4 x G-1Is), SKE, SKF.

**ROMULAN B:** KRL, KR, K5R, KVR (6 x G-SFs + 4 x G-1Is), 2 x K4RD, K5RS.

**ROMULAN C:** KE, 2 x WE, 2 x WH (5 x G-1Is + 5 x G-SFs), 2 x BH-E, SE.

**KZINTI A:** CC, BC, CM, FFK, CVE (6 x HAAS), FFE, SF.

**KZINTI B:** CVS (12 x HAAS), CME, DWE, CM, FFK, MSC.

**GORN A:** CCF, BC, HDV (6 x G-18 + 6 x G-10), HDE, BDE, SCF.

**GORN B:** CDD, HDD, HDV (6 x G-18s + 6 x G-10s), HDE, BDE, HDS.

## SCENARIOS

**THOLIAN:** CC, CA, 2 x DD, 2 x PC+, BW (4 x Spider-IIs + 4 x Spider-IIIs), PCE, SC.\*

**HYDRAN A:** LM (6 x Stinger-2s), RN (7 x Stinger-2s + 2 x Stinger-Hs), HR (6 x Stinger-2s), LN (4 x Stinger-2s), KN, HUNT, SC.

**HYDRAN B:** LB (3 x Stinger-2s), DG (3 x Stinger-2s), TR, KN, LN (4 x Stinger-2s), CUIR, SC.

**LYRAN A:** CC, CA, CVL (12 x Z-Vs), CWE, DWE, SC.

**LYRAN B:** CWL, CW, CVL (12 x Z-Vs), CWE, DWE, CWS.

**ISC A:** CA, CL, CS, CVE (8 x SF), FFE, FF, SC.

**ISC B:** CVLS (6 x SF + 3 x TF), 2 x CL, DE, FFE, FF, SC.

\*For the Tholians, a RIF mission is a MAJOR effort.

**DEFENDING PLAYER:** The defending player takes an ordinary deck of playing cards, shuffles it, spreads it out face down on the table, and picks one card. Consult (SL112.451) and (SL112.452) below and determine the matching unit. Place the unit(s) in hex 1010, heading at the option of the defending player, speed 10, WS-I.

The scenario is then ready to begin.

**(SL112.3) LENGTH OF SCENARIO:** The scenario continues until all forces belonging to one side (including those defending units which have yet to arrive, excluding any which the defending player does not allow to arrive) have been destroyed, captured, or have disengaged.

### (SL112.4) SPECIAL RULES

**(SL112.41) MAP:** Use a floating map.

**(SL112.42) SHUTTLES AND PFs:** No shuttles have warp booster packs.

**(SL112.421) MRS shuttles** may be purchased [up to the limits in (J8.5)] under (SL112.431).

**(SL112.422)** If using EW fighters, one fighter of any squadron of 8 or more can be an EW fighter. If not using EW fighters, it will be a standard fighter of the most common type. Romulan exceptions: A) The two WarHawks count as one carrier with a single fighter squadron between them. One of the G-SFs can be an EW fighter for this squadron. B) There can be no EW fighters on the SkyHawk-B.

**(SL112.423)** There are no PFs in this scenario.

### (SL112.452) WARSHIP SELECTION TABLE

CARD	FED	KLINGON	ROMULAN	KZINTI	GORN	THOLIAN	HYDRAN	LYRAN	ISC
10	CA+NCL	D7+D5	KE+BH	BC+CM	BC+HDD	CA+CW	CA(D)+CL(T)	CA+CW	CA+CL
9	NCL+FFG	D5+F5	KD5R+K4R	CM+FFK	HDD+DD	CW+PC	CL(H)+FF(H)	CW+FF	CL+FF
8	CA	D7	FH-A	BC	BC	CA	CA(D)	CA	CA
7	NCL	D5	SpH-A	CM	HDD	CW	CM(T)	CW	CS
6	DD	F5C	BH	DD	DD	DD	DD(L)	DD	DDG
5	CL	D6	KR	CL	CL	C	CL(T)	CL	CL
4	DW	F5W	SkH-A	DW	BDD	DD	DD(K)	DW	DDL
3	FFG	F5C	K5R	FFK	DD	PC	FFL	DD	FFL
2	FF	E4	SeH-A	FF	FF	PC	FF(C)	FF	FF
A	Pol	G2	Sn-P	Pol	FF	PC	Gen	Pol	Pol

**(SL112.453) JOKER:** A joker (one per deck) indicates the arrival of a carrier group including one CW carrier, one CWE, and one FFE or DWE. This group arrives on turn 6.

**(SL112.454) SUITS:** The suit of the card determines the arrival time, as follows:

Spades..... Arrives on turn 2  
Hearts ..... Arrives on turn 4  
Diamonds..... Arrives on turn 6  
Clubs..... Arrives on turn 8.

**(SL112.455) NOTICE:** At the start of each odd-numbered turn, if (and only if) the RIF squadron's scout remains in the

### (SL112.43) COMMANDER'S OPTION ITEMS

**(SL112.431)** The RIF force has a total of 100 points to buy extra equipment. Each defending size class 3 ship has 20 points, and each defending size class 4 ship has 10 points, to buy extra equipment. Each ship can purchase additional or special equipment as Commander's Option Items (e.g. T-bombs, extra marines, etc.) up to 20% of its combat BPV within the totals defined above (the lower limit will apply). Defending freighters receive no points for this purpose and cannot have any Commander's Option Items. See (S3.2) for details and exceptions. Note that whatever is spent here counts in the Modified Victory Conditions (S2.2) as victory points for the enemy.

**(SL112.432)** All drones are "medium;" speed-20.

Each ship can purchase special drones up to the historical percentages as part of the Commander's Option Items. Note that (S3.2) allows drone ships extra points for this purpose.

**(SL112.44) REFITS:** All ships have all applicable refits for the Year 175. Klingon exception: Klingon ships are noted as to whether or not they have received the "K" refit.

### (SL112.45) DEFENDING UNITS

Since the defending player did not know that an enemy RIF would enter the sector at this time, he has little control over what forces are present. Basically, the defending player will use an ordinary deck of playing cards to determine what forces are in the area and then may summon some of them to join the battle.

Each card in the deck specifies a specific ship and indicates when that ship will arrive.

Before the scenario begins, the defending player shuffles the deck, the RIF player cuts it, and the defending player takes the top four cards. He studies these and places them face down on the table. They are not revealed until the scenario is over, when they must be revealed to confirm their proper evaluation.

### (SL112.451) NON-WARSHIPS

Face cards (King, Queen, Jack) define non-warships which are used only in the set up (SL112.2). Any face card drawn during the procedure in (SL112.45) is counted as "no reinforcement."

A King always means a convoy consisting of one large freighter, two small freighters, and one police ship.

A Queen always means one large freighter.

A Jack always means one small freighter.

battle, within 12 hexes of the squadron flagship, and uncrippled, the defending player must announce whether any reinforcements will arrive on the next turn and from which direction they will appear.

**(SL112.456) ARRIVAL:** At the start of each even-numbered turn (before energy allocation), the defending player turns up any of his cards of the appropriate suit (including any face cards, which produce no reinforcements). For example, on turn 4 he would turn up any cards of the suit Hearts. For each card turned up (if any), the defending player must immediately decide if he will take that

reinforcement. If so, the counter(s) for that unit(s) is selected and placed on the map 15 hexes (exactly) from any defending unit (which must be the closest defending unit), heading towards that unit, speed max, WS—III. The defending player cannot delay reinforcements. If he does not bring them on when called for, they are lost (they are not destroyed; they simply never arrived).

**(SL112.5) VICTORY CONDITIONS:** Use the Modified Victory Conditions (S2.2). Count all defending ships which actually enter the scenario.

**(SL112.6) VARIATIONS:** The scenario can be played again under different conditions by making one or more of the following changes:

**(SL112.61)** The year can be set for anytime that the selected races were actually at war. The availability of ships, fighters, PFs, drone types and speeds, warp packs, etc. will of course change with the year.

**(SL112.62)** Both players bid for the RIF player position, declaring their race openly before writing down the bid secretly. The bids are revealed simultaneously, and the low bidder gets to play the RIF squadron, buying his ships with a number of BPV points equal to his bid.

**(SL112.63)** In the set up, when selecting the initial defending unit, keep turning up cards until a face card (K, Q, or J) appears and then use only that first face card for the initial ship.

**(SL112.64)** Allow the RIF player to select his own squadron from a total of 950 points (including Commander's Options).

**(SL112.65)** The defending player can draw one card every odd-numbered turn (rather than four at start). Ignore the suits; the designated ship arrives on the next turn.

**(SL112.7) BALANCE:** The scenario can be balanced between players of different skill levels by one or more of the following:

**(SL112.71)** Change the size of the RIF squadron.

**(SL112.72)** Allow a less experienced defending player to pick five cards or a more experienced one to pick three.

**(SL112.73)** Delete the scout from the RIF force.

#### **(SL112.8) TACTICS**

**RIF PLAYER:** You have the best of all possible military situations. An enemy force will be delivered up in front of your weapons one at a time, allowing you to concentrate your forces and destroy them one at a time. As each enemy unit appears, jump on it with everything you have and kill it as soon as possible.

At the end of each odd numbered turn, designate some units to adjust their weapon arming cycles so that they will have armed weapons at the start of the next turn when defending reinforcements will arrive.

Keep an eye on the balance of forces as new units continue to arrive. This includes not just the number of ships in play, but also their damage status and ammunition supplies. When you fall behind, get out.

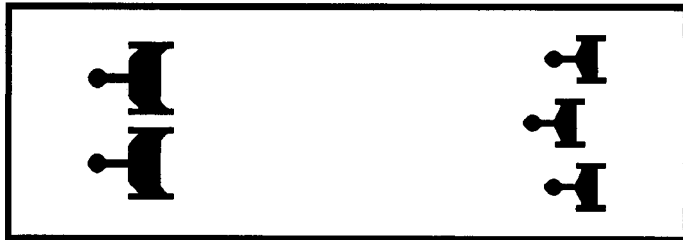
**DEFENDING PLAYER:** You have two objectives. Unfortunately, they are contradictory and exclusive.

Your first units must survive long enough for other forces to gather and make it a fair fight.

Your first units must engage the enemy immediately and attempt to disable the scout (first) and the carrier (second) if there is one.

**(SL112.9) PLAYTESTER COMMENTS:** An interesting "scenario generator" that can produce an endless number of situations, battles, and confrontations. ▲▲▲

## **(SL113.00) THE MOTHBALL MUTINY**



**(Y175)**

by Eric Nussberger, Texas

The Klingons used vast numbers of subject races throughout the Empire, particularly in non-combat positions, such as shipyard workers. In Y175, a group of these non-Klingon workers employed in the mothball reactivation facility revolted. The revolutionaries managed to seize the two cruisers currently undergoing refit and fled toward the Lyran Democratic Republic. They knew that, if they could reach this neutral enclave, they could escape Klingon justice forever.

Moreover, they could sell the ships and live like kings!

Unfortunately for them, the border was over 2500 parsecs away, and a detachment from the Western Fleet was sent to intercept the mutinous ships, catching them only hours from the border. Due to recent reverses in the war on this frontier, these were the only ships which could be detached. If the mutineers could get past these ships, they would be free!

**(SL113.1) NUMBER OF PLAYERS:** 2; the Revolutionary player (mutineer) and the Klingon player (loyalist).

#### **(SL113.2) INITIAL SET UP**

**MUTINEER:** 2 D6s (renamed: *Revolution*, *Deliverance*) within 3 hexes of 4004, heading E, speed 10, WS—III.

**KLINGON:** E4B *Determined*, E4B *Devoted*, E4D *Stubborn* within 2 hexes of 0328, heading B, speed max, WS—III.

**(SL113.3) LENGTH OF SCENARIO:** The scenario continues until all units belonging to one player have been captured, destroyed, or have disengaged, or until the mutinous ships rendezvous with the LDR squadron (SL113.46), or until other Klingon reinforcements arrive (SL113.47).

#### **(SL113.4) SPECIAL RULES**

**(SL113.41) MAP:** Use a floating map. Keep track of displacements due to (SL113.46) and (SL113.47).

**(SL113.42) SHUTTLES AND PFs:** No shuttles have warp booster packs.

**(SL113.421)** No ship in this scenario is qualified to carry an MRS shuttle; in a variant of the scenario, one may be provided to a ship eligible to carry one under (J8.5).

**(SL113.422)** If using EW fighters, one fighter on each carrier will be an EW fighter if set in a year when EW fighters are available. If not using EW fighters, it will be a standard fighter.

**(SL113.423)** There are no PFs in this scenario.

#### **(SL113.43) COMMANDER'S OPTION ITEMS**

**(SL113.431)** The following ships have the following special equipment in lieu of purchasing Commander's Option Items. Each of the E4s has its full load of two T-bombs and two dummies. The D6s each have two real and two dummy T-bombs. There are no other option items.

**(SL113.432)** All drones on the E4s are "medium;" speed—20. The two D6s still have their original load of type-I slow drones (4 per rack, one set of reloads).

Each E4B has the following drones: one ECM, one type IV, and three type-I drones per rack. The E4D has one ECM, one type-IV, and three type-I drones in one rack. The other three racks each hold one type-IV and four type-I drones. Both reloads on all loyalist ships are identical.

**(SL113.44)** Refits. Each of the E4s has received the drone rack and B refits as appropriate. The Mutineer D6s have not received any refits.

**(SL113.45)** The mutinous D6s have the following special rules:

**(SL113.451)** The mutinous ships are short on fuel and cannot exceed speed 16 or disengage by acceleration. They cannot evade by sublight as this would keep them in the area long enough for additional Klingon forces to find and capture them. The mutineers can only disengage by separation and only in direction E. If they disengage in any other direction, they are considered recaptured.

**(SL113.452)** The mutinous ships are newly activated from mothball status. They have no refits, no UIM, and no DERFACS.

**(SL113.453)** The mutinous ships cannot mutiny because no non-mutineers are on board. The destruction of the security stations on the ships will have no effect on the ships, other than counting as a destroyed box. They cannot self-destruct. The special ability of security stations in (D7.422) does not operate.

**(SL113.454)** The mutineer ships have only one third of their normal crew complement and only one half of their boarding parties (round up). Both ships are treated as having poor crews.

**(SL113.455)** If any of the loyal Klingon ships mutiny during the scenario, the mutineer player assumes control. The ship can move but cannot fire weapons. The mutinous crew is "poor."

**(SL113.46)** A squadron of LDR ships is located in a hex which is 500 hexes in direction E from the original hex 4004. The Klingons cannot enter any hex within 15 hexes of the LDR squadron. Any mutinous ship (either of the D6s or a Klingon ship that mutinies during the scenario) which moves within 10 hexes of the LDR squadron is safe and cannot be attacked, although any seeking weapons en route can complete their movement. (In the context of an imaginary gigantic map with three-digit hex numbers, the LDR squadron would be in hex 010-254 and the mutineer start position is in hex 510-004.)

**(SL113.47)** Other Klingon forces are racing to the scene, but they cannot arrive in time if the mutineers take a direct route to freedom. Beginning on turn 40, each surviving mutineer ship rolls one die at the start of each turn. If the result is a "1," another Klingon ship has arrived and is placed 30 hexes from the mutineer ship in direction B; roll again next turn. To determine which type of Klingon ship arrives, roll another die:

1 = D7B 2 = F5B 3 = G2 4 = D5 5 = E3 6 = E4B.

**(SL113.5) VICTORY CONDITIONS:** The victory conditions are based on the success of the Klingons in capturing the mutineers without losing their own ships.

The mutineer wins a dramatic victory if both D6s escape and a substantial victory if any one mutinous ship escapes. He wins an incredible victory if both D6s escape and if one Klingon ship mutinies and escapes. He wins a pyrrhic victory if both D6s are destroyed or captured but a Klingon ship mutinies and escapes. If no mutinous ships escape, the mutineer player cannot win.

Klingon victory is evaluated on a point basis. The Klingon player (only) scores points as follows:

Each D6 which escapes\* ..... ±-9  
Each D6 destroyed..... -3  
Each D6 damaged but recaptured ..... -1

Each E4 destroyed ..... -4  
Each E4 crippled ..... -2  
Each E4 with internal damage..... -1

\* The only means of escape is to rendezvous with the LDR squadron or escape by separation in direction F.

± All points are negative since nothing good can come of this.

The number of points determines the level of Klingon success.

(-2) points: Brilliant Klingon success  
(-3) to (-8) points: Significant Klingon success  
(-9) to (-17) points: Acceptable Klingon success  
(-18) to (-25) points: Unacceptable Klingon outcome  
(-26) to (-33) points: Unconscionable Klingon fiasco  
(-34) points: Total Klingon Disaster

## (SL113.6) VARIATIONS

**(SL113.61)** Only ISF units could intercept the mutineers. Replace the pursuit force with: F5I, E4I, 2xG2.

**(SL113.62)** Replace the pursuit force with a Lyran force asked to intervene (and interested in not letting any new ships reach the LDR). Replace the E4s with a Lyran DD+ and two FF+s.

**(SL113.63)** Replace the D6s with a pair of F5s, and use only the two E4Bs.

**(SL113.64)** Include a small carrier with the Klingon forces, an E4V or F5V with an escort (this would replace two of the Klingon ships, Klingon player's choice which two are replaced). This ship would launch its fighters ahead of the mutineers, then stay out of the way while they engage, then pick them up as they fell behind, then race around the mutineers to repeat the tactic.

**(SL113.65)** Assume the LDR did not wait for the D6s to cover this last distance, but sent a small force out to assist them. At the end of turn 8, and every turn thereafter until an LDR force appears, the mutineer player rolls a die. If two or less is rolled, three LDR MPs will arrive 40 hexes in direction E from the D6 or Klingon ship that is then closest to the LDR. Simultaneously, two Klingon D5s will arrive from direction B, 40 hexes from the ship furthest from the LDR. (The D5s, in this case, are in the area because intelligence had indicated something was up within the LDR, that something proving to be the despatch of this small LDR unit to contact the mutineers.)

**(SL113.7) BALANCE:** The scenario can be balanced between players of different skill levels by one or more of the following:

**(SL113.71)** Change one of the E4Bs to an F5B.

**(SL113.72)** Replace the E4D with an E4B.

**(SL113.73)** Delete the T-bombs or add more T-bombs to the mutinous ships.

**(SL113.74)** Allow the Klingon to roll for reinforcements sooner.

**(SL113.75)** Reduce (or increase) the distance the mutineers must travel to link up with the LDR.

**(SL113.76)** Increase or further reduce the maximum speed which the D6s can attain.

## (SL113.8) TACTICS

**MUTINEERS::** The first point is for the rebels to get past the intercepting squadron. If so, the scenario degenerates into a running battle with the mutineers using retrograde tactics.

With small crews, the mutineers cannot form militia (unless they transfer some crew units from one ship to the other). As such, they will be vulnerable to boarding actions. However, in order to succeed, the E4s will have to be lucky or have their shuttles available to help get the marines in.

**KLINGON:** The relative speed of the D6s and the Klingon drones will require the Klingons to launch from very close or from ahead of their targets. Most drones (including three scatter-packs) must be used in the initial pass to halt the D6s and overwhelm them. If you can deliver a concentrated attack

from short range, a D6 will be destroyed by a single volley. They should prepare random SPs for defense.

**(SL113.9) COMMENTS:** The BPVs are very similar, but the scenario portrays a battle between pre-war ships and mid-war ships, an unusual fight.

If the two mutinous ships go in separate directions, the scenario will be a bit more complicated to play as the ships will be on (at least) two maps. Keep track of the relative positions, however, as the scenarios may converge if both ships head for the LDR squadron.

**(SL113.10) HISTORICAL OUTCOME:** The intercepting Klingon force was severely damaged in the encounter, but they succeeded in disabling the escaping ships long enough for help to arrive. Both D6s were recaptured, repaired, refitted, and eventually joined the DSF, though almost three months behind schedule. Nothing more was ever heard of the mutineers. ▲▲▲

## (SL114.0) SCOUT REPORT



(Y170)

by Ryland Leyton

Shortly after the ISC incursion into Romulan territory in Y169, the Romulans sent a long-range automated probe into ISC territory to gain what information it could. Months later the probe returned, damaged by unknown causes. Due to its damaged navigation computer, it ran out of fuel in a nebula on the fringes of ISC space between the Romulan Empire and the Gorn Confederation. The Romulans sent their nearest ship to recover the probe, but Gorn Intelligence (also interested in information on this new and unknown power) intercepted the messages and sent their nearest ship to recover the probe first.

**(SL114.1) NUMBER OF PLAYERS:** 2, the Gorn player and the Romulan player.

### (SL114.2) INITIAL SET UP

The entire map is a nebula (P6.0). Players should review this rules section *before* starting the scenario. There are many systems which do not function in a nebula.

**ROMULAN:** (Tribune Tiercellus) SkyHawk-A *Battleaxe* in 0424, facing B, WS-III, speed 4.

**GORN:** (Lt. Commander S'Treleg) BDD *Kalessin* in 4201 facing E, WS-III, speed 4.

**(SL114.3) LENGTH OF SCENARIO:** The scenario continues until all forces belonging to one side have been destroyed, captured, or have disengaged.

### (SL114.4) SPECIAL RULES

**(SL114.41) MAP:** The map is fixed; it does not float. Any unit leaving the map has disengaged and cannot return.

**(SL114.42) SHUTTLES AND PFs:** No shuttles or PFs have warp booster packs.

**(SL114.421) MRS** shuttles cannot be used in this scenario (P6.4).

**(SL114.422)** There are and can be no fighters in this scenario (P6.4).

**(SL114.423)** There are no PFs in this scenario.

### (SL114.43) COMMANDER'S OPTION ITEMS

**(SL114.431)** No option items can be used by either side except by mutual agreement. See (P6.4) for limitations imposed by nebulas on most such items.

**(SL114.432)** All drones (if used in a variant) are "medium;" speed-20.

Ships which use drones can use special drones up to the historical percentages.

**(SL114.44)** The BDD has the BDD+ refit. The SkyHawk has no refits.

**(SL114.45)** Neither player knows where the probe is at the start of the scenario. Each player rolls a die before the Energy Allocation Phase of each turn. A die roll of "1" indicates that the player who rolled the "1" has detected the probe's homing beacon and discovered its location. The fact of this discovery is known to both players, but only the player who rolled the "1" knows the location. The other player continues rolling until he also rolls a "1," at which point he also learns the location of the probe. This reflects the probe's homing signal being deflected and scattered by the nebula's interference.

**(SL114.46)** Place Klingon drone counters 1-7 in a group. Place Kzinti drone counters 1-6 in another group. Place Klingon drone counters 11-15 in a third group and Kzinti drone counters 11-16 in a fourth group. All groups are placed upside down, and each group is shuffled. (Do not shuffle the groups together!)

The first player to roll a "1" takes one drone counter from each group. (The remaining counters can then be put away.) These counters reveal the location of the probe as follows:

Column: Multiply the single-digit Klingon drone number by 6, and subtract the Kzinti drone number. A final result of 0 is treated as 42.

Row: Multiply the second digit of the double-digit Klingon drone number by 6, and subtract the second digit of the Kzinti double-digit drone number. Treat 0 as 30.

The four selected drones are set aside face down after the player who rolled a "1" notes their numbers and determines the location of the probe. When the other player rolls a "1" (or at the end of the scenario), he examines the counters and both players verify the location of the probe.

**(SL114.47)** To recover the probe a ship must dock with it. To do so, the ship must be at a speed of 1 or less; no tractor beam is required.

**(SL114.48)** Neither player can fire at the probe. Once one ship has docked with the probe, the other player cannot recover the probe. See (SL114.5).

**(SL114.5) VICTORY CONDITIONS:** The only condition for victory is recovery of the probe; the information gained from it is worth more to either government at this time than any destroyer. The victor is the one who recovers the probe and exits the map first. The player who disengages with the probe wins a major victory. If the other player destroys him before he leaves the map, then that player wins a minor victory.

**(SL114.6) VARIATIONS:** The scenario can be played again under different conditions by making one or more of the following changes:

**(SL114.61)** Replace the ships with cruisers, PF tenders, or exploration cruisers.

**(SL114.62)** Add an ISC DD and a third player; it must prevent the other two ships from recovering the probe. It may do this by recovering the probe itself or by destroying the ship that has the probe aboard.

**(SL114.63)** Replace the Gorn ship with a Federation DDG.

**(SL114.64)** Use both (SL114.62) and (SL114.63) but merely add the Fed ship and do not delete the Gorn.



## SCENARIOS

(SL114.65) Each of the location die rolls determines part of the location. If a player rolls a "1," he may pick the drone from the first (Klingon 1-7) group (or examine the drone picked by the player who previously rolled a "1"). If the player rolls a "2," he can pick (or examine) the drone from the Kzinti 1-6 group. If the player rolls a "3," he can pick (or examine) the drone from the Klingon 11-15 group, and if the player rolls a "4," he can pick (or examine) the drone from the Kzinti 11-16 group. Obviously, once any player picked the drone from one of the four groups, the other drones from that group can be put away.

(SL114.7) **BALANCE:** The scenario can be balanced between players of different skill levels by one or more of the following:

(SL114.71) Permit one or both players to start knowing the counter from the Klingon 1-7 group.

(SL114.72) Replace any ship with a larger ship or a leader variant.

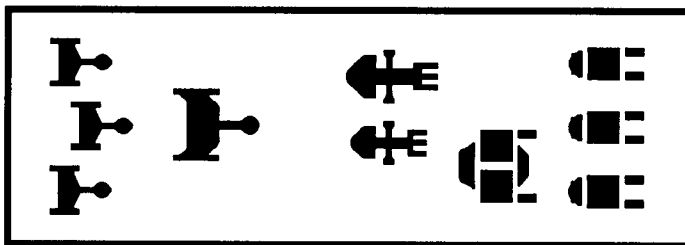
(SL114.73) Replace any ship with a smaller ship.

(SL114.8) **TACTICS:** There are two basic strategies: 1) destroy the enemy and *then* look for the probe or 2) recover the probe and run for it. The Romulan has better weapons arcs, more phasers, more reserve power, more internal volume, and a better turn mode. The Gorn must counter this with his extra torpedo and pseudo torpedo.

If you want to pick the probe up, park on it and salvo all of your torps at the other ship to keep it away; then run.

(SL114.9) **HISTORICAL OUTCOME:** The Romulan ship, using its superior turning ability and weapon arcs, succeeded in forcing the Gorn ship to disengage and recovering the probe. This success resulted in the promotion of Tribune Tiercellus to command of the Sparrowhawk *Avenger*. Lieutenant Commander S'Treleg was not criticized as he had fought a more maneuverable vessel to a near standstill, and he had reason to believe (incorrectly as it turned out) that the probe would never be recovered. He eventually rose to the rank of Admiral. ▲▲▲

## (SL115.0) A TASTE OF FIRE



(Y174)

by John D Berg, Chicago

The Klingons, with larger wartime academy classes, found that there were too many cadets for assignment of one per ship. To help rectify the situation, the Klingons devoted entire ships for advanced cadet training. Up to 50% of the officer positions were filled by cadets, and even more cadets replaced parts of the crew. All of the cadets rotated through the various junior officer positions for training. These ships would be sent on easy missions in order to quickly learn the fine art of starship operation during combat. This was called "giving the cadets a taste of fire." As this operation progressed, it soon became a means of minor punishment for the experienced Klingon officers fallen from favor, just a Slirdarians' hair away from a penal ship.

One of these cadet training ships was the D6B *Anarchy*, commanded by Captain Ky. On his last "taste of fire" cruise, the *Anarchy* led the only Klingon squadron in position to exploit a recent breakthrough in the Kzinti lines, and the fleet commander, Commodore Jark Valgan, ordered Ky to break into the Kzinti rear area and raise havoc among the support and supply echelons. Ky came upon a well-defended Kzinti convoy. He considered avoiding the convoy and looking for easier prey, but he knew that doing so would expose him to charges of cowardice from his political enemies (one of whom was the commodore). At the least that would earn him another tour of the wretched "nursery school" duty; at worst it would see him executed. Ordering the cadets to battle stations, Ky turned his squadron to engage.

Unknown to Ky, his first officer Kalis Kryle was in the pay of Commodore Valgan. The young and ambitious Commander Kryle was looking for any opportunity to seize command of the ship on the grounds of Ky's supposed incompetence. He knew that Ky's enemies in fleet command would support the move if he had adequate justification — or even if he didn't.

(SL115.1) **NUMBER OF PLAYERS:** 2; the Klingon player and the Kzinti player.

(SL115.2) **INITIAL SET UP:**

**KLINGON:** D6B *Anarchy* in 0524, heading B, speed 20, (as these cadet-manned cruisers always had a preparedness problem, it is at WS-II).

F5CVL *Dragon Carrier* (8 x Z2 Fighters, 48th Fighter Squadron) E3E *Omega*, and E4B *Watch* set up anywhere in the D6B's RA arc, heading B, speed 20, WS-III.

**KZINTI:** DD *Dragon*, AuxCVL FV-26 (12 x Streak Shuttle, 49th Fighter Squadron), Pol-FF+ FP-79, Large Freighter, Small Freighter, Small Drone Armed Freighter, set up within 3 hexes of 2406, heading C, speed 10, WS-III.

(SL115.3) **LENGTH OF SCENARIO:** The scenario continues until all units belonging to one player have been captured, destroyed, or disengaged. After 10 turns the Klingons must have disengaged or they are considered destroyed. Kzinti reinforcements are on the way.

(SL115.4) **SPECIAL RULES:**

(SL115.41) **MAP:** Use a floating map.

(SL115.42) **SHUTTLES AND PFS:** No shuttles or PFs have boost packs.

(SP115.421) If using the optional MRS shuttles, there is an MRS shuttle on the F5CVL.

(SP115.422) If using EW fighters, one of the Z-2s on the F5CVL is a Z-2E. If not using EW fighters, it is a standard Z-2. There is no Kzinti EW fighter.

(SP115.423) There are no PFs in this scenario.

(SP115.43) **COMMANDER'S OPTION ITEMS**

(SP115.431) Each ship can purchase additional or special equipment as Commander's Option Items (e.g. T-bombs, extra marines, etc.) up to 20% of its combat BPV. See (S3.2) for details and exceptions. Note that whatever is spent here counts in the Modified Victory Conditions (S2.2) as victory points for the enemy.

(SP115.432) All drones are "medium;" speed=20.

Each Kzinti ship can purchase special drones up to the historical percentages as part of the Commander's Option Items. The Klingons have one ECM drone on the D6B and no other special drones.

(SL115.44) REFITS: The Kzinti FF has the C-8 refit. All Klingon ships have the B refit if available for that ship. The D6B has received one UIM module. The E3E has limited aegis.

(SL115.45) If the D6B loses all security stations, it automatically mutinies (G6.3) and will immediately disengage. If the D6B disengages, then all other Klingons must also disengage.

(SL115.46) The F5CVL, its fighters, the E3E, and the E4B, collectively referred to as the "escorts," are under strict orders to let the D6B see combat first; to reflect this use the following rule. The escorts may not move out of the D6B's RA arc until the D6B takes at least one point of shield damage caused by enemy fire. When the D6B takes this shield damage, all restrictions are lifted from the escorts. In addition, during the time the escorts are under the restriction, they may only fire or launch seeking weapons at enemy drones, fighters, or shuttles that come within 8 hexes of their ship. Any escort that is hit and receives shield or internal damage by enemy fire (this includes striking a T-bomb placed by the Kzinti) is immediately released from the restrictions.

(SL115.47) To simulate the power struggle between Ky and his disloyal 1st officer, do the following: An officers' rebellion (which is different from a mutiny) will occur sometime during the scenario. To determine when the rebellion occurs, roll one die each turn (except turn 1) after Energy Allocation. If the die roll is equal to or less than the turn number, the rebellion starts on that turn. If not, roll on the next turn. Once the rebellion starts, do not roll for rebellion again.

(SL115.48) Once it is known on what turn the rebellion will start, you must determine when during the turn this will happen. Roll one die immediately. If the result is 1-2, the rebellion occurs at the start of the turn. If not, roll again at the start of impulse 8, at which point a die roll of 1-4 indicates the start of the rebellion. If not, a rebellion is automatic at the start of impulse 16.

(SL115.49) EFFECTS OF REBELLION: When the rebellion actually occurs, the ship is considered "uncontrolled;" see (G2.0). The ship stays uncontrolled until Ky puts down the rebellion (eliminates all rebellious units). During the fight the bridge was damaged; to reflect this mark one bridge box as destroyed; it does not count towards Kzinti victory conditions.

To resolve the rebellion, use the combat system in (D16.0). Captain Ky has control of nine boarding parties and all control spaces in the boom. First Officer Kyle has five boarding parties and all control spaces in the aft section. [If you do not have (D16.0), which was in Nexus #10, Update #2, and will be in Module M, simply use the normal combat procedures.]

The escorts, which are loyal to Captain Ky, cannot place friendly boarding parties or crew units on the D6B before the rebellion takes place.

(SL115.491) Ky has control of sections A and B (on the boarding party diagram) of the *Anarchy*. Kyle has control of section C. Captain Ky is considered the defending player.

(SL115.492) If a number of Kzinti boarding parties greater than or equal to the number of Kyle's rebels board the *Anarchy*, Ky and Kyle will make a temporary ceasefire (i.e. they may not fire on each other) in order to deal with the Kzinti threat. Remember to keep track of which BPs, Ky's or Kyle's, are lost in combat. After the Kzinti boarding parties are reduced to less than the number of Kyle's boarding parties, Kyle will again start the rebellion. There may still be Kzinti boarding parties at that point, and you will need to use the three-way combat rules in (D7.35).

(SL115.493) Whenever Ky generates militia, assume that Kyle does the same. If Ky doesn't generate militia, Kyle will at the maximum rate. Note that rule (D15.831) must not be violated.

(SL115.494) For boarding parties lost because of internal damage or for boarding parties that have left the *Anarchy*

before the rebellion, use random determination for whether they are Ky's or Kyle's. Roll a die for each boarding party destroyed or transported before the rebellion began: 1-4 it was loyal to Ky, a 5-6 to Kyle. If extra boarding parties were purchased under the Commander's Options, one in each three is loyal to Kyle. The first boarding party of each group of three is the one loyal to Kyle. Thus, if 10 extra BPs are purchased, four will be loyal to Kyle.

(SL115.495) Guards: One of every four guarding boarding parties (assigned prior to the rebellion) are loyal to Kyle. No more than one Kyle BP will be on guard duty. When the rebellion occurs, roll randomly to see which guard is Kyle's. Take note as to where you place guards as (D16.31) forces them to be in specific parts of the ship.

(SL115.496) If the crew of the *Anarchy* mutinies, then they will kill Kyle and Ky and follow (SL115.45).

(SL115.497) The rebellious units are controlled by the Kzinti player and cannot cut power, lower shields, or destroy security stations. They win by allowing the convoy to disengage which may entail the ship being crippled by Kzinti fire. When and if the D6B is crippled, the rebellion automatically ends as no one wants to attend a Kzinti barbecue.

(SL115.5) VICTORY CONDITIONS: Use Modified Victory Conditions. However, if the D6B is crippled, the Kzinti automatically receives a tactical victory; if the D6B is destroyed, the Kzinti automatically receives a decisive victory.

(SL115.6) VARIATIONS: The scenario can be played again under different conditions by making one or more of the following changes:

(SL115.61) FEDERATION CONVOY: Escorts include: CL, AuxCVL or Pol-CV carrying F8 fighters, and a Pol or FF.

(SL115.62) HYDRAN CONVOY: Escorts include 2 Gendarmes and a Lancer. All fighters are Stinger-1. There is NO AuxCVL in this case. Small armed freighter is fusion type.

(SL115.63) SMALL-SCALE: Use an F5B in place of the D6B escorted by an E4B. Replace the Kzinti Escort force with one standard FF with the C-10 refit (no Pol, no AuxCVL, no DD). With smaller ships, the scenario can be played in less time.

(SL115.64) PENAL: Replace the D6B with a D6JB.

(SL115.7) BALANCE: The scenario can be balanced between players of different skill levels by one or more of the following:

(SL115.71) Replace the F5CVL with a E4V.

(SL115.72) Alternatively, replace the Kzinti DD with a smaller or larger ship.

(SL115.73) Increase the class of the fighters on either side.

#### (SL115.8) TACTICS

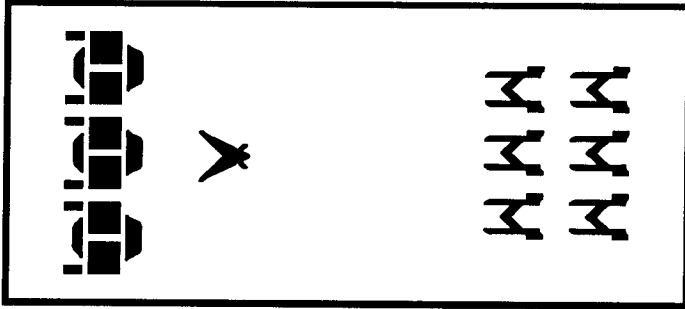
**KLINGON:** You know the mutiny is coming, so do not put yourself into an unfavorable position as being uncontrolled could have devastating effects.

**KZINTI:** Remember your victory conditions; the *Anarchy* is the key to victory. Use hit and run raids to destroy security stations and control boxes in the boom as that will hasten the Klingon's disengagement.

(SL115.9) HISTORICAL OUTCOME: The *Anarchy* was severely damaged, and most of the cadets were wounded or killed by both the damage the ship sustained and the internecine struggle within the ship's corridors. Captain Ky died in the fighting, and his family was disgraced for the near annihilation of an entire graduating class. Commander Kyle's duplicity was rewarded with assignment to the *Demonlayer* as first officer and later execution along with Commodore Jark Valgan. ▲▲▲

## SCENARIOS

### (SL116.0) INTERCEPTOR TRAINING



(Y176)

by Gregg W. Dieckhaus, Missouri

After the Lyrans developed interceptor technology, they quickly put together a training program in an attempt to gain combat experience with this new technology. The training program consisted of matching a group of new recruits with a group from the original test crews. After several weeks of study, the cadets were ready for their first mission: a raid on a Hydran convoy. Unfortunately for the Lyrans, they encountered a rather heavily guarded convoy.

**(SL116.1) NUMBER OF PLAYERS:** 2; the Hydran player and the Lyran Player.

#### (SL116.2) INITIAL SET UP

**HYDRAN:** 1 x Hunter Frigate *Vehement*, 1 x Large Q-Ship with 2 x Stinger-1 fighters, and 2 x Large Freighters set up anywhere within three hexes of 1903, WS-III, heading C, speed 8.

**LYRAN:** 1st Interceptor Squadron (6 x Lynx Interceptors), one each in the following hexes: 0127, 0226, 0327, 0429, 0529, 0629. All WS-III, heading A, speed max.

**(SL116.3) LENGTH OF SCENARIO:** The scenario continues until all forces belonging to one side have been destroyed, captured, have disengaged, or until turn 20, whichever event occurs first.

#### (SL116.4) SPECIAL RULES

**(SL116.41) MAP:** Use a floating map.

**(SL116.42) SHUTTLES AND PFs:** Lyran INT have warp booster packs; Hydran fighters and shuttles do not. There are no MRS shuttles or EW fighters in this scenario.

#### (SL116.43) COMMANDERS OPTION ITEMS

**(SL116.431)** If using a variant with drone firing interceptors, the escort and Q-Ship may be allowed T-bombs as appropriate for their size classes.

**(SL116.432)** All drones (if playing a variant) are "medium;" speed 20. Drone armed interceptors can be allowed up to their racial percentage of special drones. Escorts and Q-Ships are only allowed type-I drones.

**(SL116.44)** The Hydrans have the fusion refit (E7.5).

**(SL116.45)** Hydrans may only disengage in directions A, B, or C; Lyrans may only disengage in directions E or D.

**(SL116.46)** Five of the interceptors are green crews; the sixth has an ace crew. The Lyran player selects one of six Kzinti drone counters numbered one to six to designate this interceptor and places it face down on the board where it can be examined by the escort player after the game or after an interceptor has performed an action that a green crew could not perform.

**(SL116.47)** The ace interceptor (unless it has been disabled or destroyed) can never be more than three hexes away from at least two other interceptors. It can never be more than the third furthest interceptor from any freighter in the convoy (except during the first turn). If these conditions are not met on any impulse, the green crews automatically "lose heart" [see (SL116.48) below] due to their teacher's timidity.

**(SL116.48) Lyran Morale:** If the ace crewed interceptor is destroyed, or out of warp power (disabled), or under the conditions of (SL116.47), the green crews might lose heart and disengage. On every turn after this has occurred, before Energy Allocation roll a d6. If the result is a 1 or a 2, the green crews will immediately disengage. One is subtracted from the die roll for each interceptor not counting the ace that has also been destroyed or disabled. If any of these die rolls is an unmodified 6, the green crews will have found their courage and no further rolls are made.

**(SL116.49)** Any interceptor that has lost all warp power and managed to repair one or two warp boxes still counts as disabled. If it repairs three warp boxes, then it is no longer disabled provided it also has at least one functional weapon (an empty drone rack in a variation using Klingon or Kzinti interceptors does not count as a "functional weapon"). [This IS barely possible under (D14.32) and (D9.7) combined, but would take 11 turns and assumes the impulse engine is intact.]

**(SL116.5) VICTORY CONDITIONS:** The Lyran player wins if he disables both of the large freighters by destroying all of their warp, including any repaired before the end of the scenario. Any repairs that would be completed at the end of turn 20 or later (by either side) are not considered to have occurred. The Hydran wins by preventing the Lyran victory or by capturing one of the interceptors.

**(SL116.6) VARIATIONS:** The scenario can be played again under different conditions by making one or more of the following changes:

**(SL116.61)** Replace the Lyrans with Klingons or the Hydrans with Kzinti.

**(SL116.62)** Reverse the sides, and use a Lyran convoy and Harbinger interceptors.

**(SL116.63)** Replace the entire convoy with two small freighters and a small Q-ship and a Gendarme, all fighters Stinger-1, and use only three interceptors.

**(SL116.64)** Replace the large Q-Ship and both large freighters with three Hydran large armed freighters.

**(SL116.7) BALANCE:** The scenario can be balanced between players of different skill levels by one or more of the following changes:

**(SL116.71)** Replace the large Q-ship with a Hydran large armed freighter (favors Lyran).

**(SL116.72)** Allow Hydran to have 1 or 2 T-bombs on the Q-ship and/or 1 or 2 T-bombs on the frigate (favors Hydran).

**(SL116.73)** Replace Hunter with Gendarme Pol Corvette and two Stinger-1 fighters (favors Lyran).

**(SL116.74)** Replace the Q-Ship's fighters with Stinger-2s (favors Hydran).

**(SL116.75)** The green crews are average crews for all purposes except (SL116.47) and (SL116.48) (favors Lyran).

#### (SL116.8) TACTICS

**HYDRAN:** You have about four choices.

First is to circle the wagons and go slow (speed 5 or 6) with all shuttles deployed for extra firepower and all excess energy into ECM. The frigate will have to stay at high speed to keep the Lyrans from slowing up to use more ECCM (the green crews

only have three free points because of that one point of ECM they have to give you; being also short one point of power, they only have eight points to work with and anything you can divert from weapons gives you an edge).

Second choice is to split up, move the frigate and the Q-ship to engage and try to hold the interceptors off until the freighters can disengage by distance. This is really chancy as the interceptors may go around you to get at the freighters, and they are a lot faster than your Q-ship.

Third is to not slow up and hope you can pound through their shields with long-range fire and count on doing well with warp hits blowing off their engines by exploding their packs.

Fourth is to stop the convoy and use tactical maneuvers to keep bringing new shields around while you try to get the frigate in behind them to pick them off.

In any case, you should NEVER overload the fusions except with what batteries you have at the point of firing. A Lyrans seeing your fusions drain into space is going to be very happy as he can close to range 3 and attack before you can reload and your other weapons are not an adequate deterrent.

If you get a chance to put marines on an interceptor, take it. Even if the Lyrans destroy it to keep you from capturing it, the risk may be worth eliminating the units. Always remember that mid-turn speed changes may afford you the opportunity to deal more damage than your enemy was expecting.

**LYRAN:** The Klingon Sabre Dance is your best choice. Do not come into range 8 for any reason except to administer the *Coup de Gras* since you really cannot afford to overload the disruptors anyway, and your ph-2s will demand too much of your power if you fire them. If you really want to have the effect of an overloaded disruptor, just narrow salvo the two you have. Another point is that by not overloading it takes at least two weapon-A hits to completely remove the punch of your interceptors on any single pass. Speed is critical, or you may find yourself caught. Wear them down with concentrated disruptor fire on one target at a time. Bend with his tactics, but always remember you have the initiative, not the Hydran. If they deploy the shuttles, it might be wise to try to pick them (and the fighters) off first. Do not waste shots on the fighters unless you are as certain as you can be that they will be destroyed, or the deck crews will simply repair them. Always remember the freighters are your goal, killing the frigate and the Q-ship will just be fluff and a major embarrassment if you kill them and the freighters escape. Do NOT reveal which PF is the ace if you can possibly avoid doing so. This essentially means that it should act in all ways as a green interceptor, but should probably avoid being in a conspicuous location which means being very careful of the constraints (SL116.47) places on its location. Try not to give the Hydrans too many chances to board one of your interceptors, as the loss is embarrassing and you really cannot afford the time to divert your remaining firepower to destroy it. Watch for his mid-turn speed changes to try to catch you, but do not expect to get much value out of them yourself. Remember, if you have to you can HET on battery power if things get "tight," but you can only do this safely ONCE, and then only if you have provided yourself with reserve warp power. Do NOT let yourself be tractorred or you can write off that interceptor

**(SL116.9) HISTORICAL OUTCOME:** Pressing on in the face of the Hydran fire, the Lyrans cadets saw their teacher's interceptor explode in a ball of fire. Galvanized into action, the cadets pushed their attacks home, disabling both freighters at the cost of two more of their interceptors destroyed. The Hydran frigate was damaged and forced to abandon the freighters. The Q-ship sustained some light damage and, after beaming the survivors off the freighters, scuttled them. The Lyrans cadets had performed well under fire, but by far their greatest reward came

when a Lyrans ship investigating the site the following day picked up two escape pods, one of which held the instructors. ▲▲▲

## PLAYTESTERS

Those who playtested material for this issue include:

**BATTLE GROUP AMARILLO:** Steven Petrick, John Chisum, Thomas Chisum.

**BATTLE GROUP CHICAGO:** John Berg, Mike Esposito, Pete Teel, Clay Sager, John Hilgers, Joe Manak, David Bostwick, Rich Campbell, Bob Atchison, Shannon Townsend, Craig Peterson, Tony Zbaraschuk.

**BATTLE GROUP DAYTON:** Ken Stith, Dennis Frost.

**BATTLE GROUP DENVER:** Mac Michalik, Kieth Hurd, Eric Shanholtzer, James Norris.

**BATTLE GROUP HOUSTON:** Frank Crull, John Viles, Eric Nussberger, Henry Triplett, Matt Burleigh, Terry Haugh, Stuart Gelb, Chris Address, Brad Hinkle, Brian Klinger, Paul Kramer, Paul Hamilton, Mike McKenzie, Gregg Wheelless, Curtis Wood, Quentin Cantrell, Jason Faulks, James Chrysler, Jeff Kelley.

**BATTLE GROUP LOS ANGELES:** Ray Olesen.

**BATTLE GROUP MICHIGAN:** Keith Velleux.

**BATTLE GROUP MINNESOTA:** Scott Olson, Carl Gadow.

**BATTLE GROUP NEW JERSEY:** Tom Carroll, Chet Jasinski, Rick Phelps, Josh Jameson, Bill Schoeller.

**BATTLE GROUP NEW YORK:** Robert Patterson, Geoff Pinello.

**BATTLE GROUP NORTH CAROLINA:** Jim Hart, Steve Rushing, Sandy Hemenway.

**BATTLE GROUP OKLAHOMA:** Chuck Strong, Eric Ellsworth, Tim Burk, Steve Theison, B. Moore, C. Roberts, Craig Rutherford, Dan Semsel, Eddie Bowman, Tom Greulich, Bob Schwab.

**BATTLE GROUP SEATTLE:** Scot McConnachie, Steve Beaty, Dan Bennett, Rick Burningham, Tim Tozer, Brian Adams, Aaron Bianco, Kurt Dingler, Tony Fosmire, Craig Reece, Steve Zamboni, Drew Malidore.

**BATTLE GROUP ST LOUIS:** Gregg Dieckhaus, Kent Logsdon, Richard Beyer, Gary Rucker, Alma Wetzker.

**OPERATIONS GROUP PHILADELPHIA:** Owen Riley, Bill Walter, Rich Barlow, Chiang Ren, Steve Schneeweis, Jim Shandling. ▲▲▲

## ARE WE HAVING FUN YET?

— Cadet Joseph Hatfield, HMS New Brunswick

A great way for a beginner to lose interest in Star Fleet Battles is to consistently lose to his teacher. Many new players do not try to learn the game because their teachers are more interested in winning than in teaching. If you want to build a stable of solid opponents, I suggest the following:

- Explain all the basic rules carefully.
- Point out all available options to the player on any critical impulse, but let him make the final decision.
- Do not kill him with fancy tactics or rules that you have not taught him yet.
- If you have more than one player who is trying to learn, settle for running the charts and advising both players. Let THEM challenge you when they think they are ready.
- Do not frighten them with the rulebook, but explain that there are basic rules to play with and more advanced rules that can be learned over time.
- Start them with a single race and a single one of its opponents, and then gradually introduce that race's other enemies.—*SPECIAL SPORTSMANSHIP AWARD* ▲▲▲

## TERM PAPERS

Each issue of Captain's Log presents a series of Term Papers from the students of Star Fleet Academy (i.e. from you, the players). Each paper presents a specific tactic, dirty trick, play aid, or new idea for use by the players of SFB. Readers of Captain's Log are invited to submit Term Papers to ADB.

This issue of Captain's Log begins a new phase for Term Papers. We will be publishing a lot more of them and, as a consequence of this new more rapid pace, have restored the original promotion requirements.

Ranks are assigned to players on the basis of how many of their Term Papers have been published, as shown on the chart below. This includes tactics articles and F&E Tactical Notes. The best Term Paper and the best Tactical Note in each issue count double for this purpose.

- 1 = Cadet
- 2-3 = Ensign
- 4-7 = Lieutenant
- 8-13 = Lieutenant Commander
- 14-19 = Commander
- 20 = Captain

Fleet Captains are Origins National Champions. Commodores and Admirals hold staff positions. Ship assignments correspond to home states or provinces.

### ROCKY ROAD WEDDING CAKE

— *Cadet John Quinnely, USS Missouri*

The best mines for Tholians around their bases are NOT explosive mines, but rather large phaser captor mines set in each web layer. As many as possible should have command detonators. In this way, the average large captor can inflict 10 points of damage a turn, and until the attacker can penetrate the outer web layer, the mines cannot be swept.

**RATED THE BEST TERM PAPER IN THIS ISSUE.**

### THE BIG ANCHOR — *Lieutenant Steven Petrick, USS Florida*

Frequently a wave of drones is wasted because of the use of WWs or phasers. It is also very difficult to get an SFG-equipped ship into position to freeze the enemy. One solution is the D6M. This ship can approach an enemy at a high speed, and instead of using its batteries to power the mauler, it can apply tractors to up to three enemy vessels. It then emergency decels while the SFG-ship, or the drone waves, close in. The targeted ships will not be able to employ weasels or move out of the range of the SFG. They can then be placed into stasis (or hit by drones) while the mauler recharges and/or the appropriate scatter-packs and drone salvos are fired.

*"Lieutenant" Petrick holds the rank of Fleet Admiral as a full member of the Committee, co-commander of the Klingons, and second in command of the Star Fleet Universe, but has requested that his earned rather than awarded rank be listed.*

### FLEXIBLE PHOTON POWER

— *Cadet John Woolridge, USS America*

If you are going to prepare overloads, and your enemy will have a shot at you before they are ready, do NOT overload all at once. In the case of a Fed CA, fully overload two with six points of power each, but only begin standard loading the other two. In this way, if the enemy punches your shield and scores a torpedo hit or two, you can select the two that have not been overloaded and so not waste the overload energy. On the other hand, if the enemy moves out of or is moving out of range, you can select one of the two overloads as the destroyed torpedo and be able to at least fire two standards when you finish them on the following turn.

### ESG CONCENTRATION — *Ensign Jay Clendenny, USS Illinois*

One of the big hang ups the Lyran has always had with his ESGs in a fleet action (especially against the Kzintis) is that he needs to stack his ships together for mutual support of fire-power, but this only allows one ship to have ESGs up at a time.

To minimize the time between the first ESG going down and getting the second up, I suggest the following procedure be used by the Lyran. (This is an example. Both ships are in the same hex.)

Ship A has ESGs up. Ship B does not. Ship B announces release of ESGs on impulse 2. (That means they will be up on impulse 6.) This does not bother ship A because the ESG is not yet up from ship B.

On impulse 5, the Lyran must either countermand the order for ship B to raise ESG or (if ship A's ESGs are already down) allow them to raise. This (in effect) allows only a 1 impulse gap between ESG fields from fresh ships.

Any number of ships could use this tactic. For defensive purposes, it makes Kzinti drones (or fighters) plow through three layers of ESG from three ships (assuming availability).

For offensive purposes, (especially against slow moving targets), you can ram with two or three consecutive ESG fields from different ships.

### APPROACHING TACING TARGETS

— *Cadet Paul Kramer, USS Texas*

When approaching a ship performing warp and/or sublight tactical maneuvers, you should position your ship on the hex spine relative to the target, i.e. at even hex ranges (range 2, 4, 6, etc.) from the target, and your fire will bisect two shields. By combining slips toward the target with straight moves, you will alternate shields on which your direct-fire weapons will strike. By firing a few weapons on each of two shields, you can determine which shield(s) the target ship reinforced, if any.

You can then fire your remaining weapons on the shield of your choice. Note that although tactical maneuvers are performed after normal movement, you will still alternate back and forth between two different facing shields with each hex of movement, hence it will be impossible for the target ship to continuously face your ship with a single reinforced (or strong) shield.

### CUTTIN' LOOSE

— *First Star Lord John Olsen*

When you are ready to integrate your various SFB rulebooks into a single binder, call around to local printers. At least one will have a "shear" which can slice the bindings right off for less than a dollar, giving you loose pages to sort.

### BATTERY BALANCING II

— *Cadet Robert Mantzel, USS West Virginia*

Andromedans, when forced to take battery hits, should destroy the ones with energy in them first. You will take no damage from the "released energy" in this case, and you will need the empty ones to allow you to clear your panels somewhat in the coming Energy Allocation Phase. You should be careful of which batteries with power in them you mark off as you may need some of that power next turn, however.

### PF REPAIRS — *Ensign Tony Zbaraschuk, USS Washington*

PF hull damage should always be repaired first. It's cheap, and due to the construction of the PF-DAC in (K5.0), it acts as armor for more critical systems.

For modular PFs, such as the StarHawk and Multi-Role Needle, changing modules is probably faster than making repairs.

Finally, since docking a PF internally forces the PFT to slow to speed 1, you should avoid doing so in combat.



## DEFLATING THE ESG

— *Ensign Robert Tweedy, USS Missouri*

The key to beating a Lyran ship with a Kzinti ship is, of course, to get as many solid objects to hit an operating ESG at the same time as possible. One easy way is to use a type-IVMW drone, possibly with external armor modules. Thus, a sphere can be damaged by as much as 25 points. This saves rack space, conserves shuttles, and (most important of all) prevents damage to your ship. A good rule of thumb is one type-IVMW drone to one ESG.

## THE REAL RESERVE

— *Commodore John Hammer, USS New York*

Many tactics begin "after your opponent has used his reserve power..." and are difficult if not impossible to pull off if your opponent has not yet used his reserve power. It is possible to lead an unwary player to the belief that one has used his reserves by allocating an amount of reinforcement to a shield equal to the amount that could be applied by the reserves (in a tournament, that would be 5 points for most ships). Allow your opponent to hit that reinforced shield. When he observes that the shield was reinforced with exactly the amount of power that could have been applied by the reserves, he will probably assume that the reinforcement came from the batteries. This often provides some tactical surprise should your opponent then attempt anything 'cute' or tricky.

## FEDERATION PASSIVE RETROGRADE

— *Fleet Admiral Frank Crull, USS Texas*

When operating in the retrograde, Federation ships should try to fire their proximity photons during the first impulses of the firing turn. In this way, they can then shut the fire control off and, in the following turn, gain an additional point of power for other uses (speed, arming the photons, electronic counter-measures, etc.), and after 32 impulses they gain the extra two points of ECM from passive. This latter benefit will rarely accrue except in those cases where one ship is damaged and designated not to fire while making repairs.

## SWAC DRAGGING

— *Ensign Brenton Burchmore, HMS Australia*

If the threat of seeking weapons is great enough to send a SWACS wild, then leave the crew aboard for as long as possible. In this way, you can turn it off after all the weapons have accepted it as a target and begin to divert them. This will restrict the period of inactivity to a minimum, allowing you take any action necessary. Try locking a tractor on your SWACS and towing it along. A ship can, during the period before boost packs, pull the SWACS at speed 12, which might just be fast enough to outrun a plasma torp or delay the drones by just enough to allow weapons to recycle. Do not forget that you can "rotate the SWACS" towards your ship using the landing procedure to further delay contact. For this latter reason, you should try to tractor the SWACS with a ship that is three hexes behind the SWACS.

## THE LAYERED ANTI-DRONE DEFENSE

— *Cadet Brian Weathersy, USS America*

Instead of looking at ADDs and phasers as separate drone killing systems, they should be viewed as parts of a whole. This way, the ADD gets its shot at range 3, the ph-3 is used at range 2 if the ADD misses, and the ph-1 is used only if the other two systems miss. While this seems to be only common sense, it is not mentioned in any of the Term Papers or the Tactics Manual. Since the Federation has phaser-G as well as the other systems mentioned, they can be even more effective than other races' escorts. If you can't have aegis, this may be the next best thing.

## PESTERED BY ECM DRONES — *Cadet J. Bowen, USS Ohio*

Next time someone covers a ship with an ECM drone, have a scout use one of its channels to turn the ECM drone off. It is much more cost effective than supplying ECCM to every firing ship, and with the limited number of ECM drones available, it will not have to be done often. Thus freeing the scout channels for other functions.

## DESIGNATED BUYER

— *First Star Lord John Olsen*

Established SFB groups face a challenge with the new Captain's Edition. Do you buy just the rulebooks or the whole new products with the fancy new charts, SSDs, etc? One solution is to have one player volunteer to buy the complete products while everyone else buys the separate rulebooks. That way you all get to look at the new non-rulebook items and decide if you want them, and even if you don't, you will have access to them for reference purposes.

If no one will volunteer, everyone can chip in a dollar or two and cover the difference between a separate rulebook and a complete product, and then hold the non-rulebook goodies as a club resource file.

## CRITICAL RESERVE

— *Lieutenant Tom Chartoff, USS New Jersey*

When planning for reserve power, try to always have two points available rather than just one. This is because there are many things that two points of power can do that one point cannot. Examples are: (1) arm or overload a disruptor or fusion beam and (2) gain a hex of movement. The most critical point, however, is that with two points of power you can put up that single effective point of general shield reinforcement that can block an enemy hit and run raid attempt or block him from boarding your ship at all.

## DIVIDING THE ECHELON

— *Lieutenant Commander David Zimdars, USS Montana*

Nothing destroys the ISC Echelon formation quicker than fighting in asteroids and/or around planets. To remain on the offensive, the ISC must perform complicated maneuvers to minimize the ECM shift and to gain a clear line of sight. Rarely can the formation stick together, and once broken apart, individual ships can then be isolated for destruction.

## ANDROMEDAN SUICIDE SHIPS

— *Cadet James Webster, USS California*

Trading in a satellite ship for PSSs can gain some tactical advantages. Near the end of a turn, launch the pseudoes after the enemy has fired and send them towards the enemy ships. They would not be able to fire until the next turn, and the enemy may unleash a full strike on them to try to kill them. His weapons will then be empty as you drop your real satellite ships to destroy him. The major point is that after you have done this once, you may never have to trade a SS for PSSs again since your opponent will always be unsure and unable to fire till your SSs have shot and revealed themselves as real.

## DRONE TACTICS

— *Lieutenant Geof Mahl, USS Indiana*

A common tactic for drone-using ships is to move at the same speed on the first turn as your drones. This allows you to launch more drones, adding to the stack, on the second turn.

This tactic is not usually effective for more than two turns in a row, so you might as well fire two-space drones. They will do more damage and be harder to destroy. After the first pass, it probably won't matter if your racks are empty or not as the drones already launched will be on the board long enough for you to reload. Unless they hit, which is what you wanted in the first place.

## SIMULATE OVERLOAD — *Ensign Simon Zwart, HMS Holland*

When fighting with a Federation ship, slow to a speed on the second turn of arming consistent with overloading the photons. Your enemy will assume that you have overloaded them and turn away. With a late turn acceleration using the power you saved by not overloading, you will be able to catch them and then overload the weapons on the following turn.

## DE-MAULING THE MAULER

— *Cadet Andy Real, USS New Jersey*

In base attacks, maulers are prime targets. By having another ship push the mauler the last 16 hexes to the base, the mauler can use its engines for shield reinforcement and thereby reach the base with most of its batteries full. Note that the ship should be pushed while facing the base with its number two or six shield and should have two Tacs (one to bring the mauler into arc, and the second (impulse) to swing the mauler back out of arc until it is time for the next shot.

## WEB CASTER DEFENSE

— *Ensign John Peterson, USS New York*

When going up against a Tholian web caster force, keep several things in mind. Keep up a speed fast enough that you can side slip around the edge of a formed web. Avoid having your ships separated, or you will be defeated piecemeal. Fire when you have a line of sight to the web casting ship; eventually he will be forced to stop charging the caster in order to reinforce his shields.

## HOW TO WIN — *Admiral (Rtd) Alan M Gopin, USS New Jersey*

The most important rules section in any scenario is the victory conditions. Too many players forget that it doesn't matter how well you think you've done if the other player won the scenario. Read the victory conditions first, and always keep them in mind while you are playing the scenario. Don't do things that feel good but won't help. If the victory conditions call for you to disengage off the 42xx hexrow to win and you stop to duel an enemy ship for no good reason, you deserve to lose.

## DON'T CLOAK! — *Lieutenant James L Butler, USS Louisiana*

If you're an Orion, think before you cloak! What's the point? Instead of cloaking, double your warp and put the power into speed, shielding, and ECM. You'll be able to dish out more damage and take more hits. Also, there's no encumbering fade-in period, and the BPV of your ships will be cheaper. Remember, don't cloak if you don't really need to!

## ROMULANS AT FIVE — *Cadet Jon S Cleaves, USS Maine*

Romulan ships should never get closer than five hexes to a Federation ship. At this range, the probability of hit for a plasma bolt is maximized and the hit probability for photons and phaser-1s not optimal. The Romulan should use an oblique approach to reach five hexes and fire a mix of seeking and bolted plasmas. He should then turn or HET and use EM and/or cloak to get away. The seeking plasmas should be used to force the Fed to waste a shuttle or phaser fire. The mix of bolted and seeking plasmas should be varied to confuse Fed defenses.

## WILD WEASEL SHUFFLE

— *Cadet Alan Treschler, USS California*

When programming your wild weasel's "three turn movement," consider having several preset courses pre-written before the scenario on some separate paper so that during the turn no time is lost or intention alluded to. Simply record the "pre-written order identifier." This detailed preparation is helpful in creating a good strategy, speeds and sharpens your tactics, and is disquieting to opponents when executed.

## WYN DEATH CRUISER

— *Lieutenant Michael West, USS Pennsylvania*

Place a PPD in the two center option mounts and hellbores in the side option mounts. Shoot the PPD at 11 through 8 hexes range, and then fire the hellbores. The PPD could be replaced with a pair of photons for similar results.

## DRONE DESTROYERS

— *Ensign Steven Rushing, USS North Carolina*

Many times drone ships find themselves zipping around the fringes of the battle lending their drone support. They should always keep their eyes open for an opportunity to turn the tide of the battle by rushing in right after a period of heavy firing with their speed and getting a point-blank launch at a nearly expended CA. A tired cruiser can't stop 6-7 type-IVs launched at range 1, and the drones will crack the CA in half. This is somewhat akin to the Japanese "torpedo destroyer" tactics used in WWII. As many captains fail to appreciate the potential of a "drone CA/DD/FF" alpha strike, you stand a good chance of eliminating a key vessel. Injured ships seeking time to repair are good candidates since their phaser losses reduce their chances of stopping your drones.

## ○○○ SPECIAL TEAM PAPERS ○○○

As part of our program to publish more Term Papers, each issue will include not only the general pool but also one or more special selections, each on an important subject. Coincidentally, this will make it possible for a player to have more than one Term Paper published in a given issue of Captain's Log.

## PLASMA TEAM PAPERS

### ID THE MOUNT — *Ensign James Webster, USS California*

Whenever fighting a plasma race, whether you use (D17.0) or not, always try to identify, if range permits, which mount launched a particular torpedo. This will help you to determine if that mount has previously launched its pseudo torp and enable you to adjust your actions accordingly. Note that only by counting them will you be able to determine if a given PF has launched all of its pseudoes. *BEST PLASMA PAPER*

### GORN REVERSE RETROGRADE

— *Fleet Captain Frank Gilson, USS California*

Gorn ships can use the retrograde maneuver while moving forward. By carefully timing 60° turns to the left or right, the Gorn ship can fire LP/RP torpedoes back towards a pursuing enemy. It should be obvious that the plasma-Fs are already able to fire to the rear. This capitalizes on the design of the Gorn cruiser, which is meant to have excellent firepower in virtually all directions. *1990 GenCon Captains Tournament winner.*

### DOWNLOADED SHOTGUN

— *Lieutenant Steven P Petrick, USS Florida*

Sometimes, a plasma ship with a large torpedo may find itself opposed by two or three opponents. Engaging with a shotgunned R-torp seems a solution, but this has its drawbacks. First, since there are fewer than five targets, some of the F-torps are wasted. Second, shotgunning an R-torp demands a lot of power. The solution is to underload the shotgun. Instead of finishing the torpedo as a shotgunned type-R, finish it as a shotgunned type-G (if two targets) or type-S (if three targets). In the former case, you save four units of power, and in the later two units of power. This translates into more speed to execute your attack, or power for tractors, phasers, wild weasels, etc.

## PLASMA SHOTGUN SCATTER

— *Lieutenant James Butler, USS Louisiana*

One use of the plasma shotgun occurs by infiltrating cloaked ships into the enemy's formation. Have one ship uncloak and fire an "R" shotgun. The five plasma-F torpedoes must each be targeted on a separate unit, but if you employ a King Eagle for the ploy, it can also launch two pseudo-Fs and two additional real Fs. Faced with an average of two plasma-F torpedoes targeted on each ship in his formation, the enemy player will either have to decelerate the entire force to use weasels or accept a lot of shield damage and internals on smaller hulls.

Just before the first salvo of plasma impacts with any wild weasels, the next ship begins uncloaking and repeats the procedure on the now stationary enemy ships, and this can be done again with another ship. Note that the odds are that the first ship to uncloak may be badly damaged and possibly destroyed, but by forcing the enemy to decelerate, he has set them up for maximum use of subsequent anchors and point-blank plasma launches by the other ships, especially if the enemy uses all of his heavy weapons in an effort to destroy the first ship to uncloak.

The reason this is called the plasma shotgun scatter is because its probable effect will be to cause the enemy ships to run in multiple directions in an effort to avoid being hit by the torpedoes, breaking up his formation and permitting the Romulans to attack isolated ships that are not directly supported by their neighbors any more.

## PLASMAS AND SCOUTS — *Cadet Bruce Walton, USS state*

If you command a fleet of plasma using ships, have the flagship put 6 points to ECCM, have other cruiser size ships put up 3, and don't bother putting any up for smaller sizes. If your opponent has up to 6 points of ECM, then have the cruisers guide the torpedo. If they have 6 to 9, the flag ship can guide the torpedoes. A scout or MRS can lend the flagship some points if an opposing ship has more than 9. The only way your opponent can get a favorable ECM shift is if he has more than 15 points. Keep in mind the only time the ECM matters is on impact.

## FAST LOAD THOSE G-TORPEDOES

— *Ensign Gerald R Lane, USS Massachusetts*

Providing enough reserve power is available, fast loading a G-torpedo may be better than using a normal load. It takes less total power, six points rather than seven. Assuming close range, the resulting F-torpedo is just as powerful as the G-torpedo. Finally, this will also increase the ships firing rate by 50%. Combining the fast-loaded F-torpedo and the launcher's G-PPT will increase the chances of a hit since for the first five movements the F-torpedo looks just like the G-PPT.

## PLASMA BRACKETS VERSUS THE BASE

— *Fleet Admiral Ray Olesen, USS California*

A common tactic against bases is to sit at one range, reinforce shields, and do tactical maneuvers to keep fresh shields to bear. While tactical maneuvers are still useful, in plasma versus plasma contests doing a quick range closing and reverse can increase the effectiveness of your torps against the base.

The key ranges are 21 to 20 and 16-15. Plan your speeds so your ships can decel to speed one by impulse 28 and will end either range 15 or 20 from the base. Launch plasmas, and on impulse 4 of the following turn you spend 1 point for breaking and accelerate to speed 4 in reverse, stopping 8 impulses later. This costs three movement points, and at range 15 your torps gain R = 10, S = 7, G = 5 points per torp while the base's R torps will lose 10 points due to your being beyond range 15.

Similar results can be achieved in the range 20 to 21 bracket. While your phasers will not be effective against the base, they will be able to further reduce the warheads of any plasma the base launches. Note also that, while at range 15 the phaser-IVs will do damage, they will not do large amounts of it, and that at range 20, they have only a 2/3 chance of even hitting.

## HYDRAN TACTICS PAPERS

### FUSION ADVANTAGE — *Cadet Andrew Dederer, USS Illinois*

While the fusion beam is the weakest heavy weapon in the game, it has a few advantages. First, you only need to arm it on the turn you are going to fire it, so power can be used to close, use erratic maneuvers, and use electronic warfare. Second, at close range (0 or 1) the damage output of a non-overloaded fusion beam can rival the output of an overloaded photon torpedo for only half the energy output. Third, as has been mentioned elsewhere, fusion beams do no feedback damage.

*BEST HYDRAN TERM PAPER*

### BET-OUT-OF-HELL

— *Fleet Captain Sandy Hemenway, USS North Carolina*

If a hellbore ship ends a turn at range 9-12, you can probably bet he's going to overload his hellbores. Plan to fire regular disruptors and run away (like a Bat-out-of-Hell). If he fails to reach range 8, he must dump his OL hellbores (which you will know), and you can go in safely and toast him, now that he is out-of-hellbores.

*Fleet Captain Hemenway was the 1988 National SFB Champion.*

### HYDRAN WEASELS — *Cadet Fred Hood, HMS Shropshire*

When you have run next to that Klingon cruiser to deliver your alpha strike of overloaded weapons, it is frequently a good idea to have a weasel ready. You will have to slow up considerably to use the overloads (especially if you went for suicides), and you probably also pumped in all of your phasers to get maximum effort. Your friend, the Klingon may try to catch you with a last gasp of drones, suicide shuttles, or scatter-packs, so be prepared.

### LORD MARSHAL TACTICS

— *Cadet Michael Zecca, USS Colorado*

A Lord Marshal has two hellbores, four fusion beams, and four phaser-1s. It also has six fighters (which means about six gatling phasers and 12 fusion beams). By sending the fighters in first, fusion beam and gatling phaser damage accumulates on your enemy's shields. Then your fusion beams and phaser-1s add to the this, and the hellbores deliver the final blow. The only major difference in tactics would be against the Lyrans. In this case, the hellbores are used to lower the ESGs so that the fighters can reach the ship. The Marshal then follows with a fusion punch and can then finish the Lyrans with reloaded hellbores.

### HELLBORE DISSIPATION

— *Ensign Jay Hypes, USS Virginia*

When facing hellbore-armed Hydrans with a ship that has weak rear shields (e.g. D7), apply just enough direct reinforcement to the rear shield in order to bring it up to equal strength with shields #3 and #5 so that when a hellbore hits its energy must be divided among several shields instead of being concentrated on just one. Also, apply reinforcement to the facing shield to prevent early phaser fire from reducing it to the weakest one.

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## TACTICS BOARD

The commander finished grading the papers on his desk and reached for the transcript of the latest Cadet Tactics Review Board. He had saved the file for the last in order to enjoy reading it at leisure. The lieutenant who had brought him the file said it was somewhat unusual, and as he began to read, the commander saw that indeed it was an unusual session.

<Engineer> So what's the beef, Patterson?  
 <Patterson> We get tired of you First Classmen hauling us up here and humiliating us with questions we haven't been trained to answer yet.  
 <Crull> It's called "the Socratic method" of instruction through questioning. It's supposed to make you think.  
 <Oberheu> It only makes us sweat.  
 <Wiazowski> Look, instruction by questioning isn't bad; it teaches us what you are trying to teach us.  
 <Engineer> Glad you agree.  
 <Wiazowski> But what it *doesn't* do is teach us those things that we are interested in learning, or curious about, or scared that we may get into space without knowing.  
 <Engineer> You may have a point.  
 <Crull> Occasionally letting them ask questions may be a good idea. Now and then.  
 <Kaufman> Well, they certainly can't be expected to question us. It would break down order and discipline. Let's let the Third and Fourth Class Cadets ask questions of the Second Classmen.  
 <Crull> Good idea! We First Classmen can still chair the meeting and control the direction of the questioning.  
 <Engineer> All right, we'll do that. So, just what is it that you plebes are so curious to learn about?  
 <Many voices> Boarding party combat!  
 <Petrick> Good topic.  
 <Engineer> Very well. Petrick, you are the expert on this subject, so I'll let you set the scenario for each case. We will start the questioning with Cadet Second Class Velleux.  
 <Velleux> The cadet reports to the review board.  
 <Petrick> Cadet Velleux, you are the commander of a Klingon D5 cruiser. Would you post defensive boarding parties, and if so, what systems would you guard. If not, why not.  
 <Velleux> I would guard the sensors...  
 <Engineer> WHY?  
 <Velleux> and scanners...  
 <Engineer> Again, WHY?  
 <Velleux> Because on a D5 those systems are not redundant and damage by a hit and run raid could blind the ship's weapons.  
 <Petrick> Ahem, you should have let the lad finish his answer, and anyway, it's the Fourth Classmen who are supposed to be answering after I get the questions started.  
 <Engineer> Sorry. Force of habit.  
 <Velleux> Do you want more?  
 <Petrick> Yes. Cadet, what else would you guard, and why?  
 <Velleux> I would also guard the two phaser-1s and at least two disruptors, one on each side.  
 <Petrick> Is this all?  
 <Velleux> Also the shuttle bay.  
 <Petrick> I see, is that all, cadet?  
 <Velleux> Yes sir.  
 <Petrick> Would anyone care to comment on Cadet Velleux's deployment?  
 <Berg> I would just comment that with all those BP on guard duty it would seem you are leaving your ship open for capture.

<Zbaraschuk> Berg, if this is a duel, the other guy won't be trying to capture him. Captures are all but impossible in single-ship duels.  
 <Oberheu> The D5 has only eight marine squads, and he has assigned one to sensors, one to scanners, two to phasers, two to disruptors, and one to the shuttle bay, leaving only one to defend the ship. Also, Velleux forgot about guarding the security stations, and he has no marines for any possible offensive use. I wouldn't bother guarding the disruptors. Post one of those guards on security and the other one on the boom impulse engine to preserve your escape capability. And don't guard phasers. Guard the drones. Phaser repairs are quicker, and drones are a better target.  
 <Velleux> I agree that not guarding security was an error. I was unfamiliar with the ship.  
 <Petrick> What of your vulnerability to enemy boarding with so many guards posted? There is greater glory in capturing an enemy than destroying him.  
 <Moore> With as few marines as a D5 has, I would guard only the scanners and sensors. Otherwise, you risk spreading your defenses too thinly.  
 <Velleux> I must assume that I am part of a Klingon fleet. There are PLENTY of friendly marines around to help remove the enemy if he boards me.  
 <Petrick> Very good, Mr Velleux, but what if you are patrolling alone?  
 <Velleux> Then, I can NOT be up against a foe that would capture me in one turn, so there is no problem.  
 <Petrick> Two Kzinti frigates could put six marine squads on your ship in a single operation without shuttles, Mr Velleux.  
 <Velleux> But six marine squads will not capture me before I can pull the guards off their stations.  
 <Petrick> If you put enough of your men on guard, they most assuredly could. Let's get another opinion.  
 <Stoneking> I think a balance is necessary. I would place only three guards, but move them around from time to time, keeping different areas guarded but maintaining a force for both defense and OFFENSE if the opportunity arises.  
 <Petrick> What purpose does moving them serve since the enemy has no idea where they might be but gains the advantage that a surprise raid on any point may be efficacious?  
 <Patterson> Even in the event of the two frigate situation, why has no one mentioned the potential for using the crew as militia to defend against unwanted dinner guests?  
 <Petrick> Very Good, Mr Patterson. Now why do we not have these gentlemen standing by?  
 <Velleux> Indeed. The crew has their job to do and can't really be mobilized as militia unless we have been boarded already, and then it takes time to draw weapons and deploy.  
 <Petrick> Excellent, Mr Velleux.  
 <Zbaraschuk> Would you guard the warp engines? A few hit and run raids could produce a devastating power loss, and only two squads would be needed to prevent that.  
 <Velleux> With only eight squads there aren't enough, and by the time that power loss became critical, it would no longer be relevant.  
 <Engineer> Thank you, Cadet Velleux.  
 <Kaufman> Cadet Berg, front and center!  
 <Berg> The cadet reports to the review board.  
 <Petrick> Cadet Berg, you are in command of a Kzinti strike cruiser. You are engaging a Lyran heavy cruiser. What systems on the enemy ship would you engage with hit and run raids if that opportunity presented itself?  
 <Berg> The strike cruiser is the two disruptor version, right?

<Petrick> Correct.

<Berg> I would go for a disruptor to start, since he has only two.

<Engineer> If he has only two, they are probably well-guarded. A strike cruiser has plenty of marines.

<Berg> True, but the gamble is worth it as it can give me a heavy weapon advantage of 4 to 1.

<Oberheu> I thought Berg was the Kzinti?

<Berg> Just checking to see if the Fourth Classmen are awake. I would still target the Lyran's disruptors to even the heavy weapon odds.

<Engineer> Why not the ESGs? They are more powerful and more dangerous.

<Berg> Exactly. That's why he would guard them, and they can be avoided by maneuvering.

<Engineer> If you are close enough for transporters, avoiding ESGs is going to be a very nice bit of flying.

<Petrick> Why not the phaser ones?

<Berg> Phasers are not a bad target, but the disruptors are more tactically effective.

<Petrick> Oh? At close range the phaser-1 is much more energy efficient than the disruptor, Mr Berg.

<Berg> Disruptors have more shock effect, and he has plenty of phasers. Also, disruptors take longer to repair.

<Petrick> They can be repaired quickly for short-range work. He has the same number of phaser-1s and disruptors, Mr Berg.

<Berg> I can repair phaser-1s as phaser-2s to save time also.

<Petrick> A quick-repaired disruptor loses only the outer ranges, which you won't need at this point in a duel anyway. A phaser-2 is far less effective than a phaser-1 at all ranges.

<Zbaraschuk> Frankly, Berg's only chance with a strike cruiser against a heavy cruiser is to target the bridge and hope for luck!

<Berg> The glory is surviving adverse conditions; it is what makes one great.

<Zbaraschuk> Berg, will you target the bridge, hoping for a lucky hit and subsequent loss of control?

<Carroll> The Lyran has a double-redundant bridge, plus auxiliary control, the emergency bridge, and the flag bridge.

<Zbaraschuk> So much for that idea.

<Petrick> Thus, targeting the bridge is not a valid concept.

<Zbaraschuk> No, but with a strike cruiser he doesn't have any other chance, except maybe to hit the ESGs, so he can get close and use his short-range phasers.

<Berg> I will still target the disruptors to even the heavy weapon odds.

<Petrick> Berg, do you not expect those to be guarded?

<Berg> Probably not. Even so, he can't guard all four.

<Velleux> Hit the batteries. This will cause the Lyran to use power to cover the loss.

<Oberheu> Hit his tractors so you can use your shuttles. Or hit his shuttles so he can't weasel your drones.

<Zbaraschuk> I can't agree. You really must hit the ESGs.

<Berg> ESGs can be avoided! Direct-fire weapons can't.

<Stoneking> Use multiple assaults on the ESGs. Even when guarded you have a chance. You can beat a Lyran without ESGs.

<Petrick> Multiple attacks will simply leave you vulnerable to being boarded.

<Kaufman> That's enough with Berg. Let's get someone else up here before time runs out.

<Engineer> Who did you have in mind.

<Kaufman> Oberheu has been attracting attention.

<Crull> He's a Fourth Classman.

<Kaufman> So? Too much of this "asking the upper Classmen" stuff could get out of hand.

<Engineer> All right by me.

<Kaufman> Cadet Oberheu, Front and Center!

<Oberheu> The cadet reports to the Review Board.

<Petrick> Please specify how you would go about determining the number of boarding parties that you could risk losing in offensive actions in a single ship duel?

<Oberheu> Find the critical systems that need guarding. Maybe six or seven on an average cruiser. Subtract them from the available marines, and the result is the number of squads that are available for offense or which can be used as defense against boarding.

<Petrick> Very good, Mr Oberheu.

<Zbaraschuk> It depends on how many transporters you have -- and how many the enemy has. Save enough BPs to stop one wave of enemy BP; militia can take over the slack. Save a few guards too. Use the rest on hit and run raids. Capture is rarely practical in single-ship duels.

<Oberheu> It depends on the mission. As an escort, one would use most of the marines for guards and defense and only a couple for the odd hit and run raid. For attack, use the maximum for raids, few if any guards, the remainder for boarding or defense.

<Petrick> I think Mr Oberheu and Mr Zbaraschuk have covered the main points I was looking to bring out.

<Engineer> That's all the time we have. Thank you for your participation. We'll try to do this again sometime.

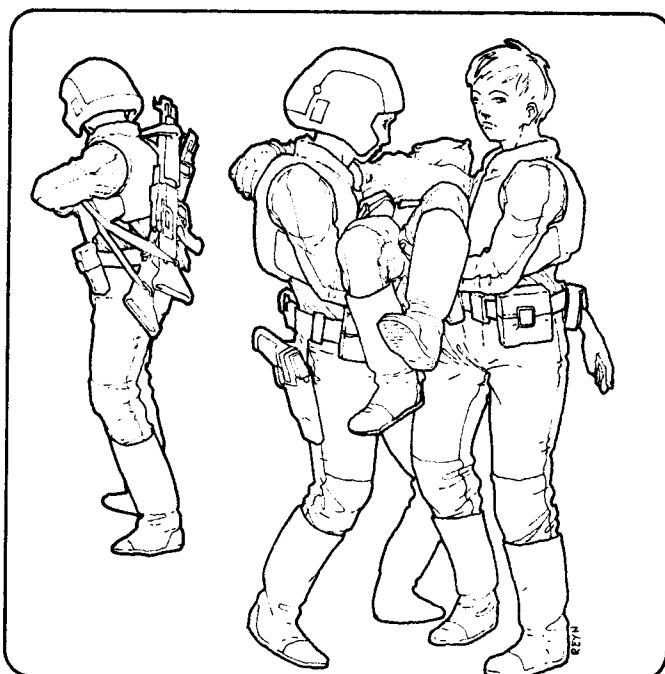
[sound of chairs moving, doors opening, etc.]

The Commander smiled and put the transcript back into the folder on his desk. The Fourth Classmen had, as all eventually did, reached the point of asking questions instead of just answering them.

Names were noted for initiative, and a notation in one cadet's file eventually sent him to captain a commando ship during the Andromedan War.

*This session of the Academy was conducted live on the GENie computer network on 19 Sept 1989. The Academy session for the next issue, on the subject of fighters, has already been held.*

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# VICTORY AT ORIGINS

*Fleet Captain Thomas Carroll, 1990 National Champion*

Having just won the 1990 National Championships at Origins, I can safely say winning a Gold Hat is very difficult, requiring skill and luck. But the tournament is also great fun. You won't find a tougher group of players anywhere. Whether you win or lose, you will meet good people and learn new tactics.

For those of you planning on competing for a Gold Hat or other Star Fleet Tournament, or for those just interested in knowing how it was done, I have written this article.

The following tactics are some I tried to use in almost every battle. Most players will recognize them, but I'll list them here for the novice and just as a reminder for others.

1. "Use Your Tractors, Dammit!" says the famous sign over the doors to the training simulator room at Star Fleet Academy. This is sound advice. Whether planning on a "Gorn Anchor," tractoring drones, or death dragging shuttles, I always had at least two energy points toward tractors. Do not ignore your tractors! They saved me quite a few times. Note, rule (J2.152) can be very important as you will know whether the shuttle you just killed is a scatter-pack, a suicide shuttle, or just a plain admin shuttle.

2. When flying a plasma ship, I always try to have some torpedoes armed and ready every turn. This serves as a deterrent to pursuit and as an ability to exploit weaknesses. Of course, if I have "Anchored" my opponent and am assured of plasma hits on the next impulse, I will unload all my plasma.

3. "Speed is Life." A high speed is very important in Star Fleet Battles. Outrunning drones and plasma torpedoes will save your life, and who moves last will often be the deciding factor in a duel. I usually plotted speed 17, the Gorn turn mode 4 cutoff, for the first half of turn 1 when engagement was unlikely. I then increased to 24 or 26 starting on impulse 18, depending on whether I felt a good turn mode (a 5 at speed 24) or number of hexes moved was important. Knowing your max speed at which you can HET, speed 26 for most tournament cruisers, is very important. Facing seeking weapons with no ability to HET can be deadly.

Against an opponent who has just emergency decelerated, I would plot a speed of 12 or so, knowing his speed is a maximum of 10 next turn. This is assuming I'm out of range 8 from his heavy weapons and he has no plasma torpedoes to fire at me. I would plot this low speed in order to conserve energy to reararm weapons and make repairs. Why waste energy on speed if it doesn't matter?

4. Be careful when you use your HET bonus. Don't do a HET unless it is absolutely necessary to win the game or to stay alive. I'd have to give myself poor marks in HET use, having performed them in bad situations or unnecessary circumstances. Luckily, they didn't come back to haunt me. In the tournament, one mistake can put you out until next year.

The following are short descriptions of my battles and some of the tactics I used. Forgive me for summarizing some tedious details and if I mis-remember anything.

## AGAINST THE PEACEKEEPER

My first opponent was flying an ISC tournament ship. One of my tactics is to fly through his plasma and PPD damage on turns 1 and 2 so that by the end of turn 2 or the beginning of turn 3 I am close to his ship. At this range, the PDD won't be able to fire (or I can do enough internals to destroy it). To accomplish this, I often hold my plasma-Ss, instead of using rolling delay, and put some reinforcement to my #1 shield for

PPD damage. My favorite amount of reinforcement is 5 points because this has a chance of fooling my opponent into thinking I used my batteries.

In this battle, my opponent plotted a low speed (14-17), and it wasn't until we were 10 hexes apart and he launched two enveloping Gs, that I realized why he was moving so slow. I phasered them down some and maneuvered to take the damage after they travelled 11 hexes.

On turn 2 I chased him at high speed, and after launching two pseudo-Ss, which he let hit at full damage (brave man), launched an S and an F which forced him to emer decel and weasel. At the end of the turn, I was at range 1 on his rear shields and my launched plasmas were on top of him. They wouldn't hit the weasel until impulse 1 of next turn. If he hadn't made the deadly mistake of plotting speed 10 and therefore voiding the WW and taking 50 points to the rear shield and allowing me to Mizia him, I had quite a bit of power to tractors and planned on Gorn Anchoring him.

## FACING THE ROMULAN

My second opponent was a Romulan, a classic plasma duel. These games usually evolve into a speed 26+ dogfight or a "Cloak (Rom) and Hunt (Gorn)" battle.

On turn 1, he launched two plasma-Ss at range 10-12. I turned away intending to let them hit after traveling 20+ hexes. On impulse 32, he centerlined me on the rear shield and bolted a plasma-S and an -F. On impulse 1 of turn 2, he bolted his other plasma-S and -F. His gambling tactic (I view bolting as risky at best in most situations) netted him 8 internals of which one was a torpedo. I HETed next impulse so that he couldn't Mizia me with his phasers and so I could chase him down and corner him. Fearing he would cloak next turn and my launched plasma wouldn't reach him, I bolted my two plasma-Ss and the -F, while also Miziaing him with phasers at range 8. My damage was inconsequential.

Turn 3 was a nail biting dogfight at 17-20 speeds, each of us trying to get on the other's downed rear shields. I came out the better on this turn because of my superior phaser arrangement. I lost my front shield and took 10 or so internals. He lost his number #2 shield to a suicide shuttle and phasers and received quite a few (25+) internals from phaser fire at range 2 through his rear shield.

Turn 4: He cloaked and I flew over him and fired phasers doing 5 or 6 internals.

Turn 5: He uncloaked at which point I Gorn Anchored him and unloaded my plasma torpedoes. When he came fully uncloaked next impulse, he launched plasma at which point I released him from my tractor and weaseled. Realizing I would receive no damage compared to his 50+ internals, he surrendered.

## INTO KZINTI SPACE

My third opponent was a Kzinti. Against a Kzinti, I usually charge with energy points allocated to tractors, a weasel, some reinforcement, and maybe an HET. Once in a while I rolling delay an S-torp, such as in this battle.

Turn 1: I charged straight at my opponent. He launched four speed-20 drones and turned away, having not fired disrupters. I proceeded to fly by his drones to let rear phasers handle them as they turned to pursue. (I almost always fire ph-1s as ph-3s to conserve power.) Around impulse 29 or 30, I centerlined him at range 2 on his #5 shield and launched two plasma-Ss, bolted two plasma-Fs, and fired six phaser-1s. I did about 12-15 internals, getting a disrupter and a drone rack.

Turn 2: The Kzinti spent the most of the turn running at speed 31 with plasma torpedoes and my ship in hot pursuit. About impulse 23 or so, he let the plasma hit and discovered

that they were pseudoes. He then began turning around, and by the end of the turn, we were 7 hexes apart. I then launched a plasma-S on impulse 32.

Turn 3: The Kzinti slowed down and weaseled. After waiting for the post-explosion period to pass, I launched an enveloping-S, which he didn't weasel. This torpedo caused 8 or 9 internals. The battle continued like this until my opponent conceded. I don't know what his game plan was, but he never fired weapons, except drones, at me. They say that in the fog of war sometimes even when you win you never get all of the answers.

### THE METHANE BREATHER

My first opponent in the semifinals flew a Hydran. My energy plot was similar to the energy plots I used against my other opponents except I had no wild weasel and I put either 6 or 8 points into tractors. This gives me a real good chance to Gorn Anchor or to tractor fighters at range three.

Turn 1: We flew head on. On impulse 26 we had centerlined one another. I tracted him and launched all my plasmas and two shuttles. He fired everything but one gatling at me and my shuttles. I took about 40 points of internals. Impulse 27 we both HETed to bring rear shields to bear, and he took 100 points of plasma to his #4 shield. He conceded the game when he realized that I still had six phaser-1s to fire and he had no way to turn a new shield.

### RETURN OF THE CATS

My second opponent of the semifinals (and fifth overall) was another Kzinti. My energy allocation was the same as against my first Kzinti opponent except I had no rolling delay plasma torpedoes.

Turn 1: My opponent plotted a speed of 14 and headed for the corner, launching speed-20 drones when I was 20 hexes away. When I was 15 hexes away, he hit my #1 shield with four standard disrupters. On impulse 32, I was at range 11 or 12 and launched two real plasma-Ss. He was in a corner, and no matter how fast he went, barring a HET, I was guaranteed 44 points would reach him.

Turn 2: My Kzinti friend plotted a speed of four and weaseled, then made a speed change to 14 on impulse 28. This is a good but rather expected tactic when you need to weasel. I spent the turn running, rearming and phasing drones.

Turn 3: I went speed 17 and headed for a corner while the Kzinti charged after me at his maximum possible speed. I timed it so that I had my #2 shield towards him and we were at range 9. Impulse 32 he launched four 4 drones and hit me with 3 out of 4 disrupter bolts. Up to this point, his disrupter fire had been incredible as he had hit me with 11 out of 12 shots.

Turn 4: Now that my plasma torpedoes and phasers were rearmed, I turned to close with him. I plotted a speed of 24 with, among other things, 2 points towards tractors. He plotted a high speed of 26+ and turned away. I used four phaser-1s to kill his drones and then was forced to use all my other phasers and a tractor to deal with the four fast drones he launched on impulse 8 (three of which were his large drones).

I then chased him. He launched a shuttle which I assumed was the scatter-pack. I tractor dragged it to death.

Around impulse 24, he had a speed change to 14. He emergency decele as I was closing on him. At range 3, I launched a pseudo plasma-S and a plasma-F. He weaseled them. On impulse 32, I turned away and launched a real plasma-S.

The game continued basically like this until I killed his last weasel and shuttle on turn 8. At this point I had taken no internals (although I had a lot of shield damage), and he had taken 20+ internals and had three down shields. On turn 11, I had two enveloping plasma-Ss prepared. I had him cornered 7

hexes away with nowhere to go and no weasel ready. He was forced to concede. I have to say his only real mistake was to fly into the corner on turn 1. That sealed his doom; it just took me a while to enforce it.

### THE FEDERATION

My third battle in the finals was against a Federation player. As I had played him before, I knew he was very good. One tactic that I have found works reasonably well is to fire enveloping-Ss and keep out of range eight as long as possible. With this in mind, I loaded an enveloping plasma-S and rolling delayed my other S-torpedo.

Turn 1: The Federation player headed away from me as I closed and launched the enveloping S at range 11. Foolishly, I mistimed the launch and almost got caught within overload range of photons by the Federation changing speed, an expected maneuver, to 26. Annoyed with myself, I was forced to use an HET. My error cost me no damage, but it did cost me my bonus.

Turn 2: I loaded another enveloping-S and was forced to leave the batteries empty (curse that stupid HET) as I needed the power to run. The Fed player ran from the first enveloping-S, and I shadowed him at range 12 or so. After the plasma hit him for 5 points of damage on all shields, I launched the other enveloping plasma-S with a plasma-F as a shield breaker and a further deterrent to pursuit. I could have timed this launch better; he almost outran them and took only 2 points of damage to his shields.

Turn 3: I charged my batteries and headed slowly to the other end of the map. The Fed followed in warm pursuit and ended 12 hexes away on impulse 32.

Turn 4: I slowed to speed four and awaited the Fed's approach. When he was 8 hexes away, I launched a pseudo plasma-S and a plasma-F, then I weaseled for the ECM benefits. The Fed turned away and led the plasma for a merry chase, finally letting them hit at minimal damage (so that he knew the S was a pseudo). I had a speed change to 14 on impulse 16. We ended the turn at range 10 facing one another.

Turn 5: This was the critical turn. I loaded another enveloping plasma-S and held a plasma-S from last turn and headed at speed 14 towards the Federation player. The Federation player came towards me, and when we were 6 hexes apart, I launched my last pseudo-S and a reloaded plasma-F. At range 4 he emergency decele and fired at me. He did maximum damage with his phasers, but only two photons hit, which together caused me 29 internals. He then weaseled on the next impulse.

I kept coming towards him and, at range one, launched my enveloping-S. He let it hit. I side slipped on him and then moved behind him. He tracted me, and I fired a few phasers and did a couple of internals.

Next impulse, I used my newly reduced speed and was able to turn and bring my other plasma-S to bear. I launched it from close range. I also fired my remaining phasers through his down shield for a few more internals.

Next impulse, he took 30 points of plasma through that same down shield. He lost his last tractor, so I was freed. I death dragged a shuttle he launched at me as I ran away.

At this point the game was basically over as I had Miziaed most of his weapons and crippled most of his shields while I was still in decent shape. He conceded three turns later when I had my plasma armed and was facing him at range 7. His main mistake, as he told me later, was that he could only afford to hold one weasel and gambled that I would bolt at him after seeing his first weasel.

Personally I would rather take the time to draw his weasels than gamble on my bolts hitting to do a few internals.

## INTO THE WYN ZONE

My final battle for the Gold Hat was against one of the most unique ships in the tournament: A WYN TC with Gatling phasers in the side mounts and plasma-Fs in the forward mounts. This ship is dangerous as it can fly at speed 31 with 12 points towards tractors or shield reinforcement. Because its skipper is also on the SFB staff (the WYN Deputy Commander in fact!), I knew him to be an expert with this ship. Knowing this, I held one plasma, rolling delayed the other and put 3 or 4 points towards tractors just so I wouldn't be Gorn Anchored! (At ranges 2 or 3.)

Turn 1: The WYN captain flew at me in an oblique approach. At four hexes range, he launched four drones, two plasma-Fs, and a shuttle. (What? No kitchen sink?) He also fired his phaser-1s and reduced my front shield by half. With so many possible seeking weapons on the board, I had no choice but to turn away. As turning towards me would set him up for unavoidable plasma, barring a HET, the WYN also turned away. I identified the drone size with labs, then destroyed them with phasers. I left the plasma-F alone as I figured they were pseudoes and, even if they weren't, I'd only take 5 internals. Next impulse, I was proven correct, they were pseudoes. I finished the turn by HETing to give chase and to kill the three shuttles he had out on the board. The HET was worthless, and I shouldn't have done it; a standard turn would have accomplished the same purpose. But I was smelling blood.

Turn 2: I gave chase at speed 31. He blew down my front shield and did a few internals. I followed him most of the turn with my down number one facing him, and he still had his two gating phasers to fire. Actually, I'd hoped he'd fire the one he could as then I could move closer than range 3 and chase him into a corner. I ended up bolting a plasma-F and firing 3 phaser-1s and a phaser-3 on his rear shield when I thought I'd lose them to damage. Later I bolted my other plasma-F and fired a few more phasers, doing 7 or 8 internals. I'd also launched my pseudoes. Finally I turned away and fired my remaining phasers through his rear shield, doing 5 or 6 more internals, killing a plasma-F, a phaser-3, and a drone rack. He ran from the plasma, not letting them hit until impulse 31.

Turn 3: I rearmed and destroyed some drones that the WYN had launched on turn 2. I spent the turn moving as far away from the WYN as possible. The WYN, of course, turned around and flew after me.

Turn 4: I flew at speed 17 and launched an enveloping-S when my opponent was 10 or 11 hexes away. I turned away and into the corner while he phasered the plasma down to 9 points on each shield. He took eight internals. He kept closing, and when he was five hexes away, I launched my other plasma-S. He phasered it some and took it on the front shield. I proceeded to Mizia him through the front shield with phasers as he closed with me. At range one, he tractorred me and launched a plasma-F. Meanwhile I tractorred two of his drones and phasered the third. He fired his remaining phasers at me, doing some internals. Next impulse I took 20 internals from the plasma. We both did hit and run raids on tractors and missed. He'd wanted to free his drones; I'd wanted to kill his last tractor to escape. Next impulse, I turned and brought more phasers to bear. The internals from this volley killed the last tractor, but now both of us had to emergency decel or hit the wall. We both decele and ended up stopped in the same hex. I launched all my shuttles as phaser platforms while he launched his last shuttle as a suicide and did 18 points to my #5 shield.

At this point the battle was really over as he had only a gatling phaser (not facing me), a drone rack, no shuttles, and 14 power while I had 2 plasma-Ss, 1 plasma-F, 6 phaser-1s, and 31 power. He conceded after two of my shuttles fired through a downed shield.

## THE WINNER'S CIRCLE

After the battle, while suffering from a combination of excitement and exhaustion, I went through a whirlwind in which I was given my Gold Hat and was congratulated by many fellow Star Fleet players. It didn't really hit me until a day later that I had survived, and that's the best term considering the competition, and was able to win the Fleet Captains tournament.

Good luck to all you aspiring Fleet Captains. I hope my experiences are of some help to you. ooo



Finals: Bill Heim (left) vs Tom Carroll. Photo by John Hammer.

## ASK UNCLE ARDAK

JH asks: *What's the best way to deal with a WW?*

801U: Well, don't kill it until you have to as the enemy is under various restrictions which you should allow to continue. The key restriction is speed. At a speed of 4 or less, it is relatively easy to predict where he will be.

Calculate precisely when the WW will be destroyed, and determine where you want to be at the point that this happens. The destruction of a WW will usually start the process of reactivating his fire control and a whole chain of events surrounding that. Be positioned to take advantage of them. If you are going to go for an anchor, be ready when the explosion fades.

As for how to kill it, there are several ways.

For one, you can just let the seeking weapons tracking it go ahead and hit it. This, however, gives you little control of the timing. In extreme cases, you may want to cut tracking to some weapons targeted on the WW and launch more weapons (when possible), just to keep him pinned down. Another possibility is to launch more seeking weapons that will arrive *after* the WW is destroyed. This will encourage him not to void the explosion. Look at what he *could* do at any point and at what you can do to make those choices less attractive.

For another, use some phasers to pick it off as you go by.

Death dragging (via tractor beam) will always work.

The absolute best way, however, is to use a commando raid. This voids (rather than destroys) the WW, returning the seeking weapons to their original target. This does encourage buying some commandoes as Commander's Options.

You can, of course, try to destroy a WW before launched. Hit and run raids on his shuttle bays are workable, and of course you can always fly a shuttle (loaded with marines for that extra something) into his bay (assuming there is a down shield).

Some players try to draw out and kill the enemy WWs, but this makes for a long game, and you may find your PPT or drone racks empty before his shuttle bay is.

Ask Uncle Ardak is our tactical advice column. Send your questions to Ardak in care of ADB. ooo

# FEDERATION AND EMPIRE

Owen G Riley, Director of Strategic Studies

Welcome to a special expanded F&E section of a special expanded issue of Captain's Log. TFG President John Olsen, ADB chief Stephen Cole, and CapLog Editor Steven Petrick asked me to assemble a really special F&E package for you this time to show their renewed commitment to F&E players. A quick check shows that there is more F&E material in CL8 than in the previous 7 issues of Captain's Log and all 18 issues of Nexus combined.

This issue is *full* of useful and exciting information:

- ✱ An article highlighting the new rules changes.
  - ✱ Commentaries on those rules changes along with the resolution of a few loopholes and omissions.
  - ✱ The first F&E "Can you give me an example..." article.
  - ✱ A new feature: Options, a compilation of optional start-up rules that can customize your F&E campaign. This issue focuses on the Lyrans and Tholians.
  - ✱ F&E Tactical Notes and Fed & Enquire.
  - ✱ A new F&E Scenario: The Wayward Wind. This provides an alternative beginning for the historical F&E campaign (the Lyrans attacked the Hydrans first!).
  - ✱ A Special bonus: New F&E Space Control Ship Counters! You have long asked for counters to be included in Captain's Log, and it is fitting that F&E has the first ones. Of course, it is impossible to bind full-thickness counters, but these "playtest counters" can be glued back-to-back to cardboard. This also allows us to give you the Romulan SeaHawk frigates you have asked for. You can buy more of these from TFG Spare Parts.
- We'll be back next issue with more exciting items for F&E, including an exciting "fighter" scenario. ☻☻☻

## Could you give me an example of... MAULER vs. FORMATION BONUS?

by Steven Paul Petrick

For our example, we will assume that a Lyran force is fighting its first approach battle against a Hydran force attempting to establish a new mobile base.

Both sides create their battle forces and fight the first round. The Hydran battle force included a scout, a class of specialty ship often targeted for Directed Damage. The Lyran player, having previously examined the entire Hydran fleet in this battle hex (104.1), knows that there are no other Hydran scouts and that, if he can eliminate this one, he will have an advantage (308.51) in subsequent battles in this hex. While the Lyran will produce less effective damage in this round, he will make up for it by taking less damage in subsequent rounds when the Hydrans are subtracting 1 from the die roll because of the (308.51) penalty.

[In this case the base is not yet active, but if it were, it would eliminate the (308.51) penalty (created by losing the scout) in subsequent non-approach battles. The Lyran might still choose to eliminate the scout in this approach battle if he felt he might be compelled to fight more approach battles under the

terms of (308.3) or if he intended to offer more approach battles under (302.22). The Lyrans are, in this case, more interested in killing ships, and they hope that by offering several approach battles they will lure the Hydrans into fighting several rounds here.]

The Lyran player, having decided to eliminate the scout, knows that he need only cripple it because doing so will eliminate its scout capabilities (205.31). Crippling instead of killing the scout will minimize the loss of damage output on the current round.

It should be obvious that the Lyran player had to decide to include the mauler in his battle line before knowing if the Hydran scout would be committed. The Lyran player assumed that some worthwhile target would be committed by the Hydrans, and if not, the Hydran force would be too small to direct damage on the mauler.

The Hydran scout in question is an NSC. This was included under the "free scout" rule (308.53). This means that the scout does not count against the command limits of the Hydran force, but cannot contribute its own offensive combat potential. (This is a fair trade as the Hydran player is not likely to put a unit with a combat potential of only 4 into the battle force when he could put in a Ranger with more than twice the combat potential instead.) When added to a battle force as a "free scout" under (308.53), the scout automatically receives the formation bonus (308.7) [requiring 3-to-1 damage for Directed Damage] and the (308.52) self-defense jamming bonus [adding +1 to its defense strength].

Hence to cripple the scout requires  $[(7 + 1) \times 3 = ]$  24 damage points if no mauler was involved. The Lyran force only generated 19 damage points and cannot cripple the scout.

The Lyran player announces that he will use his mauler to cripple the scout. The mauler, however, is under additional restrictions because of the scout's formation bonus (308.45). The effect is to reduce the firepower of the mauler by 1/3. Since the mauler in question is a Saber Tooth Tiger with a nominal combat strength of 10, it is reduced by this to 7. (Note that war cruiser maulers such as the Sparrowhawk-F which have nominal combat strengths of 7 would be reduced to 5 in this case.)

The Lyran player notes that the mauler will cover 7 of the 8 defense factors of the scout (308.41), leaving 1 which will still be tripled. This means that in order to cripple the scout with a Directed-Damage shot, the Lyran battle force must expend 10 points of damage [7 through the mauler and  $(7 + 1 - 7 = 1; 1 \times 3 = )$  3 by normal Directed Damage]. As it generated 19, 10 are used to cripple the scout and the other 9 are allocated by the Hydran as general damage (crippling a frigate and killing a few fighters).

Once crippled, the scout will retain the formation bonus but lose its self-defense jamming effect (308.52).

If the Lyran player had wanted to kill the scout in this round of combat, he would have had to score a total of 22 points of damage with the mauler as the scout's crippled defense factor is 4, and 3 times 4 would be 12. Without the mauler, the Lyran player would have needed 36 damage factors to destroy the scout. ☻☻☻

## CONVERSION PLANNING

— Ensign Jay Clendenny, USS Illinois

Careful planning is required to maximize the conversion capacity of your starbases. Have the units there, ready to be converted at the beginning of the next turn. (This is important for Gorn, Romulans, Kzinti, Lyran, and Klingons.) ☻☻☻

## IT'S A WHOLE NEW (F&amp;E) GAME!

*Commodore Bill Walter, Philadelphia Operations Group*

The new (revision 1) rules for Deluxe Federation and Empire will alter the style of play which veterans of the first edition rulebook have sworn by over the years. Several tried and true strategies have been invalidated (mostly because loopholes and quirks in the old rules were fixed), and a host of minor changes have been enacted. This article will address the changes in the rules and make some comment on their effects on play, but I will leave major strategy discussions for other articles.

## SHIPS AND OTHER UNITS

Players should be cautioned that a number of ships have new command ratings, and there have also been new ships added to the game. Therefore, the command ratings on the first edition fleet charts are outdated and, in some instances, inaccurate. Players should consult Annex (754) (which is accurate) to determine command ratings.

There have been alterations to the strengths of many of the ships in Deluxe F&E. The carriers were totally revised. In general, the excellent Kzinti carriers were downgraded (someone finally defined the escort frigates) and the Federation, Gorn, and Romulan carriers were substantially upgraded. (The Federation groups dropped an escort to improve density; the Gorns and Romulans are good because of the plasma-D racks on their escorts, which have the same offensive value as the weapons they replaced.) The Kzinti CVL, which used to be a potent carrier, is now of only marginal value (mostly because it can no longer be converted at starbases). On the other hand, the Romulan CNV and SUB, which were good carriers to begin with, are now monsters. Carrier production has been drastically affected by the new fighter rules, which I will mention later.

The Lyrans and Gorns received counters for their BCH, so all the major races have BCHs now.

The Gorn DD was increased from a 4 combat value to a 5, which more accurately represents its combat strength (DD variants were altered accordingly).

The Deluxe edition includes counters for war destroyer and war cruiser scouts and war cruiser PF tenders. Thus, each race now has options on which hull to build these variants, eliminating the problem of some races having superior PFTs and scouts.

The Klingons and Federation have at their disposal several totally new carrier types which have been added to the game. These two races now have the most options to choose from for carrier production.

The Federation has a drone ship now as well.

## MOVING RIGHT ALONG

The movement of stacks and sub-stacks has been clarified in rules (203.44) and (203.45). Previously it had not been clear how a moving stack which split up was to complete its move. The new rules state that each sub-stack completes its movement before another sub-stack or the main stack continues movement. Any units picked up by a stack are considered to have moved as many pulses as the stack.

The rules for pinning have always been confusing (vis-a-vis the interaction of command ratings). What happens when the ship the player used for the highest command rating leaves the pinning hex? Are the pinning ships counter pinned for the rest of the movement phase? Under the revised rules, the answer is no. Rule (203.51) specifically states that each new group of ships entering a hex must recalculate the pinning process. For example, suppose a D7C and two F5s enter a hex

containing a Federation NCL and two FFs. Only one F5 need be left behind. However, if two more F5s entered the hex after the D7C and first F5 had left, the three F5s in the hex would be pinned because the pinning calculations are made again each time new ships enter the hex and there is no longer a command rating advantage in favor of the Klingon ships after the D7C leaves. Suppose the Klingon player were to move another F5 into the hex. Would all four F5s be pinned because the NCL has a higher command rating than the F5s? The answer is no. Rule (203.55) says that if the moving player's rating is higher, he may leave less ships behind. Since the Klingon player is moving, the three F5s are sufficient to pin the NCL and two FFs. However, what if the Federation player wanted to react an FF onto the moving F5 before it entered the hex? This would be permissible because the Federation would be the moving player (using reaction movement and see (203.554)), and the NCL's higher command rating would allow a FF to move (the NCL and other FF effectively pinning the three F5s). Thus, the Federation would pin the moving F5 before it entered the hex containing the three Klingon F5s and the remaining Federation NCL and FF. Does this mean one F5 can leave the hex since it is no longer needed to pin the Federation ships? No, because once a ship stops moving, it cannot move at a later time. Although pinning is a complex concept, the revised rules should clarify the prior vagueness in the rules.

It was unclear under the old rules if a unit could use its extended reaction range to react to a moving unit which stopped moving. Under the revised rules, a unit may react to any movement pulse expended by a moving unit, whether or not that unit has actually moved [see (203.62) – (203.64)]. A fleet which stops moving after enemy units react move to a hex adjacent to the fleet does not prevent the enemy units from reacting into the hex (205.37).

Players should note under reserve movement (203.732) that one reserve fleet is now allowed to open a path to reach a valid objective hex for another reserve fleet. This makes it much more difficult for players to prevent reserve fleets from reaching battle hexes by setting up a line of fleets to pin the reserve fleet before it reaches the battle hex (thus preventing it from even attempting to do so).

Cloaked movement has been restricted under the revised rules. Crippled ships may not use cloaked movement (203.83) nor may ships which are out of supply [this is not specifically stated in (203.8) but is clear from (306.0)]. A ship may only use cloaking to retreat from one battle hex (306.1). This rule prevents lucky cloaked ships from retreating unscathed through a whole string of enemy occupied hexes.

For strategic movement, it has now been made explicit that ships may begin next to an enemy unit and use strategic movement; they just cannot move adjacent to an enemy unit (204.22) by Strategic Movement. Units repaired by repair ships do not get free strategic movement (204.31) as opposed to units repaired at the beginning of the turn during the repair phase which do. Destruction of SBs can only reduce free strategic movements to half of the original limit for the race (204.38). This alleviates the difficulty faced by races with many starbases relative to fleet strength. Since they had so many starbases and inadequate forces to defend them, the race could soon end up with no free strategic movement. Conversely, certain races had so few starbases that, even if the race lost all of its on map starbases, it would still have free strategic movements left.

It is explicitly stated that ships which are moving away from an enemy ship cannot be reacted to [(205.1) – reaction movement]. A ship which moves to a hex closer to the reacting ship or at the same distance can be reacted to. If fighters/PFs react to a moving unit, fight a round of battle (or are just in reserve and available to fight), and return to their base, they do not



participate in a subsequently resolved combat involving the base (205.73). Players should note that, under the old rules, fighters/PFs could only react if the reacting force would pin the moving force. That restriction is no longer in the revised rules, so fighters/PFs may react to any number of moving enemy units.

Retrograde movement can no longer be used by units which move out of supply (206.31). This change prevents players from using the tactic of moving out of supply range to attack (the attack would be supplied because the ships were in supply at the beginning of the movement phase) and then retrograding back into supply. It also means that players will be well advised to kill enemy border BATS prior to making penetrating attacks, or they may find substantial fleet elements trapped behind enemy lines and out of supply.

The off-map movement rules have been clarified in (207.0). Ships may not react move onto the map (207.24). The procedure for transferring economics by off-map movement is outlined in (207.29). Essentially it now takes three turns for a Federation ship on-map to move off-map, into the Kzinti off-map, and then onto the Kzinti capital. Of course, under some interpretations of the old rules, it always did take that long.

### IT'S A WAR, A REAL WAR

Several totally new rules have been added to the combat section in addition to revisions. In withdrawal before combat, the defender may now withdraw any number of ships, instead of one half, as long as there remain as many defending ships as attacking ships (302.13). One attacking ship can no longer hold several defending ships in combat.

The rules for approach battles have been clarified and altered. It is now specifically stated that the attacker may offer an approach battle at any time, even after fighting at the base (302.22). The attacker may find that, after several rounds of combat at a defending base, he no longer has the combat strength to continue fighting at the base. He may have enough combat strength to fight an open space battle though, and can challenge the defender to an approach battle. If the defender fails to fight the approach battle and the attacker leaves, the defender must add one to his pursuit die roll (302.23). This allows the attacker a greater chance of getting his cripples away. The defender has the dilemma of attacking away from the base and sustaining relatively more casualties (and inflicting less) or having a smaller chance of pursuing. If the defender's fleet is not large enough to fight the attacker's fleet on its own, there really is no choice.

The new rules also make it more difficult to attack positional objects. Previously the attacker needed to offer only one approach battle. Now the attacker may have to fight as many as three approach battles unless he can score more damage in a combat round than the defender (308.3). Larger fleets are now needed to conduct hit and run raids, and the defender has a better chance of protecting his MB, FRD, etc. Under the previous rules, the size of the defending fleet was largely irrelevant. Now, the defender can fight three approach rounds and inflict substantial damage on a smaller attacking fleet. The defender's goal is to reduce the combat ability of the attacker to a point where the attacker will not be able to score enough points to use Directed Damage on the positional object. To this end, the defender should evaluate how best to reduce the attacking ComPot. If there are few command ships, kill them. If a key ship can be hit, hit it. If not, let the attacker burn up his fleet with normal damage.

Players should note that there is now a limit on the number of fighters and/or PFs (three squadrons/flotillas) allowed in a battle force (302.334). This rule limits players from placing more than a small number of carriers or PFTs in a battle force.

Several new rules have added more flavor to the combat system. An apparently minor addition to the retreat priorities will greatly decrease the possible retreat routes players may use. Rule (302.733) forces players to retreat toward a supply point. This rule stops the ridiculous but common "forward retreat" strategy. That is, the loser of a combat can no longer retreat deeper into enemy territory. Notice that this retreat priority is higher than the priority against retreating into a hex containing enemy units. Thus, if a hex is the only one closer to a supply point and contains enemy units (equal to or less in number than the retreating friendly units), then the friendly units must retreat there.

The attacker can now increase the battle intensity by one after every fourth round of combat with a positional defense (304.5). This is a very dangerous rule for the attacker to employ. While it is true that the attacker will be inflicting more damage, at high battle intensities, a base and accompanying battle force will be dishing out massive quantities of damage. If the defender rolls well at high battle intensities, the attacker will have to damage and/or destroy most or all of the ships in his battle force (what I call directing on the whole force). This is not a pleasant experience for the attacker! So the attacker should be careful about where and when he wants to use this rule. One obvious choice is when the base must die but there are not enough attacking ships to capture the hex, and when the attacking ships are expendable. Another time is when the attacker is superior and just wants to get it over with.

A major revision has taken place concerning carriers. The IDS (Intermediate Damage Step) system has now been replaced by CEDS (Carrier Escort Damage System). The new system allows players to use Directed Damage on the individual ships in a carrier group. The smallest escort must be attacked (and presumably destroyed) before the next smallest escort can be directed on, etc., all the way up to the carrier. Combat values for these ships are given in Annex (757.2), and damaged or destroyed escorts reduce the combat factors of the carrier group, although the group still counts as the original number of ships for command purposes even if escorts are destroyed (308.12). This is the opposite of the old rules where IDSing a carrier reduced the number of ships in the group but did not alter the combat factors (leading to the paradox that damaging a carrier group made it meaner).

Destroyed escorts under CEDS can be replaced, and the cost of escorts has been standardized at one EP greater than the cost of the base hull. Players may now pursue a strategy of killing small escorts by using Directed Damage against them and thereby forcing the carrier player to buy more expensive escorts or keep the carrier groups out of action. Of course, it takes more damage to affect an escort than a single ship [under (308.111) one extra point for each escort in the group is added to the value needed to cripple an escort to reflect the interlocking defense of groups]. Whether this strategy is more effective than killing single ships remains to be seen. The rules do provide that a carrier which has lost escorts need not ever replace them (308.134), allowing backup groups to give up their escorts to frontline groups. You can, of course, cripple the entire group as before.

Under the new rules, scouts can now be included as an extra ship in every battle force [solely to provide scout channels—(308.5)] above the command rating. Players no longer have to make a tactical choice between including a scout in the force or putting in a more potent ship. Thus, players should now include scouts in every battle force, and the concept of killing scouts becomes an interesting option.

The new formation rule allows one ship in a battle force to be protected so that Directed Damage requires 3-to-1 rather than the customary 2-to-1 (308.7), and maulers are less

effective. This protection should be given to the largest ship which your opponent could conceivably use Directed Damage against (usually the dreadnought). Note that scouts added as per (308.5) have the formation advantage as well as requiring an extra point to use Directed Damage against because of self-defense jamming. Carrier groups may not use the formation rule (308.74), nor may bases, planets, or maulers which want to maul. Tugs setting up MBs and FRDs may have the formation advantage. This does not help the FRD much (12 points is still pretty easy to score), but it does make tugs a lot harder to destroy (especially after three rounds of approach battles). If a player wants to stop a base setup, he may want to wait until the MB is deployed and not subject to the formation rules before doing a hit and run raid. Of course, if the attacker is strong enough to win the hex, he does not have to worry about the formation rule.

One of the corollaries of this rule is that it is pointless to protect a ship with the formation rule if there are two ships of the same class in the battle force. This factor presents a strong incentive where major fleet engagements occur for the players to place only one dreadnought in the force and protect it with the formation advantage. The upshot is that now players will be tempted to fill their forces with cruisers instead of dreadnought-class ships. Cruiser casualties will become more prevalent whereas dreadnought casualties will be rare. As a consequence, the combat potential of battle forces will be generally lower (cruisers now instead of dreadnoughts under the old rules). However, players will find they have plenty of command ships since those ships are usually protected and live much longer than under the old rules. Players may find that, even if they have scored enough damage to kill a dreadnought at three-to-one, they are reluctant to do so because those points would damage a great deal of the rest of the opponent's force (this is a less painful decision if a mauler is available for use). Note that in a pursuit battle, the player can now protect a valuable crippled unit, making that unit very difficult to kill.

The new rules also allow incremental damage against SBs and BATS [SIDS, Starbase Incremental Damage System (308.8)]. This is an interesting option, but players should be cautious about using it. There is usually no need to use incremental damage against a BATS as an average battle force can usually score the required damage to kill it. Using SIDS against a SB which is vigorously defended commits the attacker to a very long battle where he will incur substantial casualties. Thus, SIDS should only be used against vitally important SBs which cannot be destroyed with conventional combat. The SIDS damage is not too hard to repair, so it does not make sense for an attacker to take substantial fleet damage in return for damaging a base.

The SIDS system has another aspect, however. SBs are "free ComPot" which puts the attacker at a huge numerical disadvantage. If there are few enemy ships, you should ignore SIDS and kill the fleet; the SB will fall by default. But if there are plenty of enemy ships, your only chance of victory may be to use SIDS to kill the SB and eliminate the free ComPot advantage it provides. Doubtless, this will be the subject of much debate and perhaps an article.

Another innovation is the command points system (308.9). Each point allows a player to add a ship to his battle forces in a given battle hex for that player-turn. Generally, command points should be used at crucial battles (Homeworlds, SBs) where several combat rounds will take place (as one command point is good for the whole player-turn). Using command points for a one- or two-round battle is a waste. Each player gets one command point per turn and can purchase more for five points apiece. Don't buy one unless you know what you will be doing with it. They can be accumulated while at war.

The drone ship rules have been revised to allow up to 12 factors to be added to a force, with each factor costing 1/10 EP (309.0). Drone bombardment under the new rules is economically feasible, and adding 12 points to a battle force makes a noticeable difference. Players must be wary of constantly using drone bombardment though. The money to pay for this will often be obtained by deficit spending. Constant use of this method will leave a player behind the eight ball because he will start with a negative balance every turn. Players may want to limit drone bombardment to valuable targets and/or where drone use will alter the outcome of the battle.

## THIS IS NOT ABOUT WAR; THIS IS ABOUT MONEY

The new rules make only minor changes to the economics system (with the exception of the new fighter rules) and the supply rules. The supply rules have been tightened up a bit, but they can still be difficult to grasp. Basically, a unit must be within six hexes of a friendly supply grid, and the friendly supply grid must contain a supply source [see (411.0) and (413.0)]. This path cannot pass through an enemy ship. It also may not pass through a hex next to an enemy ship unless there is a friendly ship in or adjacent to the hex the supply is being traced through. Players should note that, when checking supply paths, a base with a ship equivalent of fighters/PFs can block a supply path through an adjacent hex (411.32), although the base cannot likewise open such a path.

Rules are also provided for expeditionary fleets operating out of the supply grid (411.7). The player must pay 0.25 EP per turn per ship to support the expeditionary fleet (411.74). Players must weigh the advantages of expeditionary fleets with those of extending the supply grid with bases to determine which strategy they will pursue. Don't send Kzintis to Remus just because someone did in history; do it if you NEED Kzintis at Remus.

The new rules deal discretely with captured planets. A captured planet will extend the supply grid the turn after it is captured (413.1). However, it does not serve as a supply source (for units stacked with the planet) unless a PDU is on the planet (410.4). A captured planet without a PDU can be used as a strategic movement node the turn after it was captured.

Although BATS only repair four points of damage (420.42), an exception has been created which allows plasma ships requiring five points to repair to do so at a BATS (420.423). This allows the CAs and CCs on the plasma side of the galaxy to be repairable at BATS.

The rules now explicitly allow economic income to be saved from turn to turn and authorize the use of fractions [(430.1) and (430.7)], things the old rules allowed but most players didn't understand. Note that the deficit spending limit is now a fraction of a race's income rather than a set amount (430.62). This reflects the ability of large economies to do more deficit spending.

By far the most drastic changes were to the carrier and fighter production costs [(431.7) and (432.2)]. The free fighter pool from destroyed bases, carriers, and planets (used to build hordes of new carriers cheaply) has been done away with. Players must now pay 0.5 EP for each PDU fighter, 1 EP for each base fighter, and 2 EP for each carrier fighter. Each race receives a small number of free fighters for carrier production. If you have not yet figured it out from these prices, the new rules mean that the (albeit unrealistic) heyday of the carrier is over! In general, races will build carriers sufficient to use up their free fighters and think long and hard before doing more. Building carriers in excess of the free fighter allowance under the new rules will cost significant amounts of money up front for the fighters. It is true that once the initial cost is paid, fighter losses are replaced for free. However, the high fighter cost means, for

example, that a player who builds a CVA pod (28 EP) could have standard built nine frigates and had money left over! Of course, the fighters keep coming back, and the frigates cost EPs to fix every turn if they are not destroyed. Races which try to convert or build their heavy carriers in excess of their free fighters will find that they have money for little else (perhaps not even all their standard builds). Even so, those free attrition replacements remain attractive.

The cost of Hydran non-carriers works the same as the old system (432.24). The one point per fighter cost is added to the lower of the attack or defense factors for the total cost, unless the ship has a standard cost (PAL, HR, etc.), in which case the fighter cost is added to the standard cost. So a PAL costing 16 EPs with 6 fighter factors costs 22 EPs. A DG, with 2 fighter factors and an 8 defense factor [the lower of its attack (9) or defense (8) factors] costs 10 EPs to build. True Hydran carriers must pay two EPs per fighter factor, but they are the only ships allowed to use the free fighters under (431.74).

PDU's are also relatively expensive now that there is no fighter pool. Players may find themselves reluctant to pay such a great amount of money to purchase a defense unit which will only be destroyed when their opponent decides to devastate the planet (and that is usually the only time a PDU sees combat). They may rather have a mobile warship. Of course, the Federation should buy PDU's to replace any destroyed prior to PF deployment so that it can take advantage of the free doubling of fighters. Other races will find this less valuable since they must pay to replace PFs lost in combat. Buying PDU's does give the player a larger battle force if the enemy will oblige him as to the location of the battle. There are now limits as to how many PDU's can be built on a planet, so it is no longer possible to (unrealistically) make a given planet totally invulnerable by just spending enough time and money.

The transfer rules have been altered to allow tugs carrying EPs to move operationally (435.22). This means that, for example, the coalition can no longer prevent economic transfers to the Kzintis by keeping a ship adjacent to the Kzinti Homeworlds (and thus preventing strategic movement). Killing loaded tugs becomes a favorite sport of Coalition Commodores.

### JUST A FEW MORE CHANGES

Several miscellaneous rules changes have occurred. PFs now cost only 0.5 EP apiece, making them much more affordable (502.2). The rules for production of PFTs and limits thereto have been clarified. Victory conditions have been added for the Orion Pirate. Note that Klingon ships in the Orion enclave can now retreat out of it if it is recaptured by the Federation (rather than be destroyed) (503.5).

A very important addition to the rules is (503.13). This rule allows players to economically bribe one another to release interned ships. This rule does not, however, allow you to bribe the enemy not to attack.

PDU's are now battalions (or collections of battalions) that are killed a battalion at a time (or several at a time). Battalions have no crippled status. They have three factors but when directed against act as if they have five (508.21). Thus, it takes about the same damage to use Directed Damage against them, but a player who takes damage by killing PDU's gets less than he used to. Several new methods of producing PDU's have been added. Rule (508.14) lists four separate ways to create PDU's.

- A PDU can be built (431.2) at the capital for seven points (fighters included) and stored like a MB or deployed on a planet in the capital hex without further ado.

- A PDU may be added to a planet by a tug (508.32). The tug moves the PDU from the shipyard to the planet and sets it up like a MB (except that the PDU is active immediately if the planet has other PDU's on it).

- A PDU may be upgraded (433.422). Basically a tug goes to the planet and a new PDU just appears (this is not delivering a PDU as is the case with "adding"). This is the most expensive method at 10 points (with fighters) and should only be used if no other method is viable.

- Finally, a planet may increase its own PDU's (433.421) for eight points (including fighters). Basically this option allows a planet to make one PDU out of resources at the planet; however, there must be a PDU already there.

Players must now score 10 points of damage to devastate a planet. This means the attacker must still have a fair sized fleet left after killing all the PDU's, although these points can be accumulated and a frigate could devastate a planet in 10 rounds.

Tug pods now increase the command rating of a tug. A carrier pod increases the command rating one point and a battle pod by two points (509.3).

The capital defense priority rules (511.4) have been revised to make them more playable. If the race's capital planet is devastated, a race's fleets need only return to that race's territory. However, unreleased fleets are released.

Finally, players will find a host of new and revised annexes in the back of the rulebook. There is even a helpful index (sorely missed in the old rulebook).

I hope this article has alerted you to most of the changes in the rules as well as some of the implications of the changes. I leave it to future articles to explore in greater depth the effect of the new rules. This rulebook is 100% better than the original. It is more concise, reads better, and is more logical. If you enjoyed Federation and Empire before, the Deluxe Edition will enthrall you. If you have not played the original, I invite you to give Deluxe Federation and Empire a try. You will find many hours of enjoyment.

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## FEDERATION & ENQUIRE

Questions about the F&E game system and background.

### CAPTURED PLANETS

Q801F: Can a captured planet or province ever produce full economic value?

A: Not in F&E. We are considering rules to that effect for Total War, but have not finalized the decision.

### OFF-MAP AREAS

Q802F: Do off-map areas have any battle stations? They could be helpful in repairing crippled ships.

A: Sorry, but no. You can build them there to your heart's content, after you are invaded or invade someone else (or after the fleets there are active).

### MISSING LYRAN FLEET

Q803F: What happened to the "missing" Lyrans detachment. As you know, there are 20 Lyrans counties (21 before losing the LDR; of those 20, one is the king and four are dukes), but there are 19 CAs (including CCs), 19 CLs, 19 DDs, 19 FFs, and so on. Shouldn't there be a 20th detachment?

A: Owen Riley Answers: It isn't missing. The "Royal" detachment provided the CC that became the DN and the CL that became the BC. The SFB history (R11.1) says that the Lyrans started building these ships late and built the first ones by conversion. The DD and FF of the "Royal" detachment were converted into the first of the five CWs and three DWs listed with the home fleet.

More Federation & Enquire is on page 76.

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## TACTICAL NOTES

Tactical notes are the Federation & Empire equivalent of SFB term papers. Players should use the same procedure for submitting tactical notes. The ranks listed below are the same as term papers; players have a single rank and can earn promotions by term papers, tactical notes, or for short articles published in the miniatures section. One "Best of the Issue" award, counting as two published papers for promotion, is granted for F&E in each issue.

### WARP FACTOR 13

—Vice Admiral Owen Riley, Philadelphia Operations Group

Normally, ships can only move 6 hexes straight in a given turn. However, it is possible to move a ship 13 hexes during a turn. The ship moves 6 hexes to attack. It then retreats, in the same direction, from the battle. The ship then retrogrades another 6 hexes to its final destination. The total movement is 13 hexes. This is particularly important for rapid redeployment of forces when the enemy has blocked the strategic movement routes. The Federation can best use this tactic on turn 9. The Feds move ships from the Klingon border to attack the Klingon province contestors in its space with only enough ships at each target to cripple it. The Federation ships then retreat out of the battle and retrograde to their Romulan border stations. As a result, the Federation has reinforced its Romulan border without using any of its strategic movement allowance.

*Rated the Best Tactical Note in this issue.*

### FIGHTING WITHDRAWAL

— Ensign Paul Kramer, Battle Group Houston

The Kzintis and Hydrans will generally both be besieged early in a campaign game of DF&E. If either race's capital is reduced to the starbase alone (all PDUs destroyed), the defender will face a tough choice. Should the fleet defend the capital to the death, or should the fleet pack up and move off map?

In either case, a decision should be based upon the strength of the attacking fleet. If the attacking fleet is more than 2 times as strong as the defending fleet, the capital is probably lost and the defender should use Directed Damage to kill key ships before leaving. If the attacking fleet is less than 1.5 times the strength of the defending fleet, the capital can probably be saved, for at least one more turn. However, this means don't use Directed Damage against the attacking fleet.

If the attacking fleet is between 1.5 and 2 times the strength of the defending fleet, then it could go either way. Choose to fight one way and stick with that decision.

Also remember that Directed Damage on a few key ships (the last DN or scout, for example) can sometimes make the difference in a close battle. If the capital is lost, retreat with as much of the fleet as possible to safety off map. It is better to fight on another day than to lose the fleet and the capital.

### GATE TO KLINSHAI

--- Lieutenant Commander Steven Petrick, USS Texas

Once you roll into Federation space, the Federation border stations will vanish in sheets of flame. However, eventually the tide may turn, so you must make some preparations. One such preparation is to fortify that neutral planet in hex 1910. This planet is otherwise a free jump off point for a Federation counteroffensive to the Home World. Once he takes it, he does not need to build a base for supplies. In effect, this is the outer works of the Empire's capital against the Federation. From it, you can strike at any move he makes to enter Imperial Space. In his hands, the heart of the Empire is exposed.

## SHARING A KIT

— First Star Lord John Olsen, USS Maryland

The DF&E conversion kit provides a unique opportunity to F&E players to upgrade their games at minimal cost. However, it also provides a unique opportunity for players who already have DF&E, whether they bought the new edition or the conversion.

All F&E players have learned that this is a large multi-player game and that there will usually be more active players in a gaming group than copies of the game. After all, up to a dozen can play, but there isn't really a need for more than one copy.

If you are about to buy a copy of Fleet Pack to expand your counter assortment, DON'T! Instead, buy an extra copy of the conversion kit, which costs only a couple of dollars more than Fleet Pack and has the same counters. Then, sell the rulebook inside it for a few dollars to one of your opponents who doesn't own a copy of the game. This will provide him with his own rules to study (before and during the game) and (inside the cover) a copy of the map with which to plan strategy. Once all of your opponents have their own rulebooks, you will have a team of players well-versed in the rules (as well as one heck of an F&E set with zillions of counters!).

### MOVE THOSE FRDs

—Commodore Bill Walter, Philadelphia Operations Group

Tugs serve many useful purposes and tend to be much in demand, so FRDs should be moved under their own power as often as possible. It is usually possible to move FRDs into a good position even though they only move one hex at a time. For example, the Lyran FRD at 0408 can move to 0407 on turn 1, within retrograde range of Kzinti BATS 0703 and 0803 for casualties there. The Kzinti FRD in 1401 can move off map on turn 1 under its own power. The Klingon FRD at 1509 can be at the front in two turns. The Klingon FRD at SB 1716 can move to 1616 on turn 4, within retrograde distance of cripples after the attack on SB 1017. In sum, tugs should really only have to move FRDs when they are needed on another front. Remember that 2 ships with 7 or more factors can replace a tug for moving a FRD (but not for strategic movement under 421.3). CWs are perfect since they have to go to the front anyway. Also, FRDs can move on the same turn that they repair ships.

### ECONOMIC DISRUPTION

— Cadet Robert Larulippe, USS Quebec

If you find that you must withdraw your forces from enemy territory, either as part of a general retreat or because you have killed everything within range of your bases, and aren't ready to build new bases yet, try to leave a few small ships behind in enemy territory. Carefully allocate these one to a province, and be sure to cover any planets. This way the enemy cannot draw economic points from those areas, and your ships can now use reserve movement to "reinforce" one or more of these stay-behind units and destroy a selected enemy force.

If you have ships to spare near an opening behind enemy lines, send a few expendable units to "raid" any provinces within reach. This is expensive (you will lose at least 3 points worth of ships and cost him only 1 or 2 points of production) but can disrupt enemy plans to launch a counterattack as he must assign a ship or two to hunt down each of your raiders, diverting them from the main force.

If there is an enemy planet within range, send a force to devastate it. This will cost the enemy 2-3 points per turn for four turns and drive him crazy.

*Because a frigate there blocks points equal to its cost, planets are better targets. You can gain a temporary tactical advantage if you force the enemy to send 2-3 cruisers to hunt down each frigate.*

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# TOTAL WAR PREVIEW

The long-awaited expansion to F&E is now scheduled for 1991... and 1992... and 1993. Let us explain.

Total War was (until recently) never a planned product, but simply a place to list those things we wanted to do for F&E someday. No one ever sat down and counted up how many counters, pages, and charts it was going to take to present each of these ideas. When we finally did, we found out that we had too much material for one product. After considering various alternatives, it was decided that the best solution was to divide Total War into manageable sections and get them out at one-year intervals. (The alternative is one great big product two or three years from now.) The first of these will be:

## CARRIER WAR — TOTAL WAR PART I

Current plans, all subject to change of course, are to include the rest of the SFB carriers, the LTTs and pods, and the auxiliary carriers. We will also include a "design your own carrier group" rule that allows you to assemble (within limits) various combinations of carriers and escorts.

There will also be some non-carrier material, such as the war destroyers, that you will find useful. If you have any suggestions on what you'd like to see added to F&E, drop ADB a line and tell us what's on your mind.

One key element of CARRIER WAR will be the Space Control Ships, which are mentioned in DF&E under (502.7). While counters will be included with CARRIER WAR, you will find some "temporary, playtest" counters inserted in this issue of Captain's Log. You should glue these to cardboard and carefully line up the front and back of each counter.

Each race can build one SCS per year and convert one existing CVA to an SCS each year (maximum one SCS per turn by any means). You can convert non-carriers to SCS instead of (but not in addition to) production of a new SCS group. Total CVA and SCS production is under the original CVA limits. Any fighters lost in a CVA/SCS conversion are permanently lost.

### SCS PRODUCTION:

Feds, Kzintis: Replaces CVA.

Klingons: Replaces C8V.

Romulans: PHX replaces CON or TH replaces NH (one per year maximum, not one of each).

Gorn SCS replaces the DN and counts as the one allowed carrier group conversion.

Hydran SCS replaces the Paladin DN.

Lyran SCS replaces the Lion DN.

### (751.A) SCS CONVERSIONS

From .....	To .....	Cost
Fed CVA .....	to SCS .....	5 pts
Fed CVN .....	to SCS .....	5 pts
Klingon C8+D5+2xP5 .....	to C8S .....	8 pts
Romulan CON+SP+2xSK ....	to PHX .....	8 pts
Romulan NH+SP+2xSK .....	to TH .....	8 pts
Romulan SUP+SP+2xSK .....	to TH .....	6 pts
Romulan SUB .....	to TH .....	5 pts
Romulan 2xSEH .....	to SHB .....	3 pts
Romulan SEH .....	to SHC .....	2 pts
Kzinti DN+CM+2xFF .....	to SCS .....	8 pts
Gorn DN+HD+2xBD .....	to SCS .....	8 pts
Hydran PAL+DD+2xFF .....	to LP .....	8 pts
Hydran ID .....	to LP .....	5 pts
Lyran DN+CW+2xDW .....	to SCS .....	8 pts

## ANNEX (757.0A) SCS GROUPS

### ANNEX (757.1A) SCS GROUP BREAKDOWN

GROUP	SCS	ESC1	ESC2	ESC3
<b>FEDERATION SCS GROUP</b>				
4SCS	SCS	NAC	DE	FFE
<b>KLINGON SCS GROUP</b>				
4C8S	C8S	AD5	F5E	F5E
<b>ROMULAN SCS AND CARRIER GROUPS</b>				
4PHX	PHX	SP	SKE	SKE
4TH	TH	SP	SKE	SKE
2SHB	SHB	SHE		
<b>KZINTI SCS GROUP</b>				
4SCS	SCS	MEC	MEC	EFF
<b>GORN SCS GROUP</b>				
4SCS	SCS	HDE	BDE	BDE
<b>HYDRAN SCS GROUP</b>				
4LP	LP	DE	AH	AH
<b>LYRAN CARRIER GROUPS</b>				
4SCS	SCS	CWE	DWE	DWE

### ANNEX (757.2A) SCS FACTORS

UNCRIPPLED					CRIPPLED		
SHIP	EQIV	ATK	DEF	FTR	ATK	DEF	FTR
<b>FEDERATION SCS</b>							
SCS	CVA	11	12	24	5	6	12
<b>KLINGON SCS</b>							
C8S	C8	10	12	6P	5	6	3P
<b>ROMULAN SCS AND SEAHAWKS</b>							
PHX	CON	13	13	6P	7	7	3P
TH	SUP	9	10	6P	4	5	3P
SHB	SH	4	4	3	2	2	1
SHE	SH	4	4	0	2	2	0
<b>KZINTI SCS</b>							
SCS	DN	11	12	6P	5	6	3P
<b>GORN SCS</b>							
SCS	DN	14	14	6P	7	7	3P
<b>HYDRAN SCS</b>							
LP	PAL	11	12	6P	5	6	3P
<b>LYRAN SCS</b>							
SCS	DN	12	12	6P	6	6	3P

## AND A FEW SHIPS FOR OUR FRIENDS

On that card of temporary, playtest, F&E counters, you will find a few non-SCS units. These include two Kzinti MSCs and an assortment of Romulan SeaHawk frigates.

The Kzinti MSCs are easy. They are just scout versions of the CM. Conversions are listed in the Commentary section, and the scout production rules (432.4) are already in the rulebook.

The SeaHawks are almost that simple. First, the Romulans can add three SeaHawks per turn to their production schedule starting with turn 12 (Y174), losing the WE and SN from the schedule at that point. Second, conversions to the variants are listed on the chart at left. Substitutions of the scout and carrier variants are within the existing rules. Standard SeaHawks have a production cost of 3 (allowing you to build them at starbases). All SeaHawks have a command rating of 3. For your convenience, the factors for the SeaHawk carrier and escorts are on the SCS chart.

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## DF&amp;E COMMENTARIES

These are commentaries: rules questions with answers and clarifications. What got out of hand with the old "addenda" was that we continually "adjusted" the rules, all too often in response to requests, proposals, and even off-hand comments of the players. No more. Our new policy is:

- If there is a contradiction, we'll tell you which is right.
- If it seems odd, we'll explain it, but we won't change it.
- If there is a loophole, we'll plug it.
- If the rulebook doesn't say, we will.

But if it is just something you find questionable or unfair and is not a direct contradiction of another rule, we shall endeavor to keep our hands off and let the rules stand. Surely, no one can complain if we provide missing information so long as we quit changing rules that were workable when they were printed.

## 100 GENERAL RULES

101.2 *Can I freely examine the ships in an enemy stack to see what forces he has in that area?* Yes, you can. Very little is secret in F&E, and even that doesn't stay secret for very long. We may have some limited intelligence rules in a future product, but for now this is how it works.

102.0 **FLAGSHIP:** Reference should be (302.32) not (303.32).

103.3 *This rule says that the defense factor is used when defending. Does that mean that I use it to calculate the combat potential in (302.4) instead of the attack factor when I am defending a base or planet, or generally on the defensive, or when I am the non-phasing player?* Sorry for the confusion. The defense factor is used when allocating damage (302.6), not when your ship is defending something. The attack factor is always used to calculate ComPot.

## 200 MOVEMENT

203.553 Sixth sentence (12th line) in the Example should read: "The difference (6), ..."

203.731 *Doesn't this rule open up a lot of possibilities for abuse? You can use it to maneuver reserve fleets to attack enemy bases on the enemy's turn!* It's not really possible, due to the prohibition in (203.74) against entering enemy-occupied hexes, except in very contrived situations. Even so, this is a whole different way to use reserve fleets and really did deserve its own section of rules. For now, we'll just point out that (203.74) and all of its sub-sections would apply at any point in movement of the reserve unit, even if it's opening a supply line and not trying to start a battle.

203.742 *How can a base be part of a reserve fleet?* It can't; this refers to other units satisfying the unpinning requirements.

203.8 *Can crippled or unsupplied ships use cloaked movement?* No, see (306.0) and (301.8).

203.85 *Could a Romulan fleet in Klingon space that was adopted by the Klingons be one of the three fleets allowed to use cloaked movement?* No, that would be a special ability as per (410.55).

206.21 *Does this apply to liberated (i.e. re-captured) planets or only to captured enemy planets?* It applies to both captured and liberated planets. It takes time to re-establish the supply facilities that allow it to function as a retrograde point.

207.25 It will cost more to tow an FRD off the map, see (421.2).

## 300 COMBAT

302.336 See also rule (433.411) for multi-base hexes.

302.352 *If a Fed CVB loses its F-15s in combat and absorbs replacements from some other carrier, is it limited to six fighter factors because the replacements would not be F-15s? Same question applies to carriers with F-14s.* Nope, the replacement fighters are magically transformed into

F-15s and F-14s and A-10s and whatever else are needed, and the CVB stays at 8 fighter factors as long as it can get replacement fighters from somewhere. It's a fudge, sure, but it simplifies the paperwork. Basically, once you start shuffling fighters between carriers, a factor is a factor.

302.36 *If there are only three ships, I only have to put one of them into battle because the other two are rejected flagship candidates, right?* That's exactly what it allows you to do. Just consider it a "sacrificial" lamb rule. And don't send it in as a Tactical Note; we already know about it.

302.36 **EXAMPLE #1:** Of course, the scout and drone ship could be added to the battle force.

302.4 *Does a Kzinti CV group (without fighters) have a combat potential of 18 or 21?* As the rule says, you add up the attack factors, so the combat potential is 18.

302.4 There is some confusion over the use of the defense factor. It is never used to calculate the combat potential, but only when allocating damage. See (103.3) commentary.

302.61 *Damage is allocated until the remaining points are less than that required to damage the smallest unit. But do the points have to be applied to the smallest unit?* No, they can be applied to any unit of the battle force within the restrictions of various rules.

302.74 *Is this true even if the non-retreating unit is a base without fighters?* Yes. You are so excited about getting to destroy the base that you forget all about the enemy fleet. This is one of the lesser-known psychological effects of warp-speed time-distortion.

303.4 *What if the PDU is the only unit?* Then it doesn't really need a flagship. *Can I use it for a flagship in order to allow better flagships to evacuate?* No.

304.4 *If my base (the only unit I have) has fighters or PFs, does this force still count as a non-mobile unit?* Yes.

305.21 *Is this option unavailable if you captured the ship in the last combat round?* You are correct.

305.4 The reference to 12 fighters on an SCS should be to 6 fighter factors. Sorry for the confusion.

306.0 *Does the preamble to this rule prevent a battle force containing a cripple from using the device offensively?* Yes, the rule says that "uncrippled ships" can use the options.

306.2 *Do Romulan PDUs have cloaks? If not, do they prevent a battle force including PDUs from using cloaks offensively?* Romulan PDUs do not have cloaks, and since they are included in the battle force, they would prevent it from using its cloaks offensively, which makes sense given the fixed position this cloaked fleet must offensively defend.

306.3 Skip Step 2A, not all of Step 2.

307.0 *Are command points, free scouts, or drone ships used in pursuit battles?* No. *How about the formation bonus?* Yes. This applies to both the pursuer and the pursued.

307.22 *Isn't this a contradiction with (308.12) which prohibits a carrier group with crippled escort from pursuing?* No, this refers to a carrier group with a missing escort.

308.131 *Does this rule permit the defender to retrograde his carriers and repair them after a battle?* Yes. This is a special substep in the rules to allow for each player to keep his carrier groups up to strength. Note that the defending player will be using EPs and repair capability that would normally be available to him in the following turn. This was done to eliminate record-keeping by allowing you to create a situation under which all carrier groups were up to strength at all times. Of course, you now have to record what portion of the base's repair capacity has already been used, but that is simpler.

308.132 *No fair! I need an old Fed CL to replace the lost escort in my CVA group. I can substitute one for an NCL, but that will cost me an extra economic point!* Well, the Feds can

afford it. Just kidding. Anyway, you can go ahead and use the equivalent war-production hull (NCL for most cruisers, DW for most smaller escorts), and it will be magically transformed into the old escort type. In Carrier War (Total War Part I under current plans), we may have some "design your own carrier group" counters that would allow you to build a carrier group with non-standard escort groups. Don't get excited; we aren't going to allow anything ridiculous like two BCHs to escort a CVS. We will just allow some mixing of pre-war and wartime escort hulls.

- 308.53 *Does the free scout count as being in the battle force for purposes of EW support under (308.51)?* Sure. That's what he's there for. What else would a scout in that position do?
- 308.7 *Are there any minimums for the Formation Rule. Can a solitary ship use it? Wasn't it clever of us to allow solitary ships to gain that bonus to improve their chances of staying alive the one round they have to fight? Seriously, a single ship can have the bonus, but since he is going to be responsible for paying off the damage points scored by normal damage allocation, it won't matter a whole lot.*
- 308.85 *Can this be done with the free repairs for unsupplied starbases (410.34)?* No, you must pay for SIDS repair.
- 308.91 *Do you stop receiving command points when you drop to 75% economics or when you drop to 50%?* By a strict reading of (652.3) it would be 75% and that's how we'll let it stand. Consider this a clarified vagueness. Of course, you keep any you previously accumulated.
- 308.93 This rule is incorrectly numbered (309.93). Sorry.
- 310.2 *How do you choose which procedure to use? I might rather allow damage points to accumulate. You can only use the alternate procedure by mutual consent.*
- 310.2 *Can there be a pursuit battle after single combat?* No, because that would take a die roll of less than 1.

#### 400 ECONOMICS, SUPPLY, CONSTRUCTION

- 410.31 *If a fleet is unsupplied at the start of movement, but other moving units re-establish supply before it moves, does it move at 100% or 50%?* At 50% because movement is calculated at the start of the movement phase.
- 420.432 *This is confusing because it says that BATS are never part of the supply grid, but (413.1) says BATS are part of the supply grid. What gives?* This resulted from a fault in editing. FRDs must be connected to the supply grid and are never part of it. BATS must be connected to the main supply grid but can be part of that grid.
- 421.2 *Is a Sparrowhawk-H Light Tactical Transport treated as a tug or as a war cruiser?* Well, without getting into the question of whether a Sparrowhawk is really a war cruiser, let's say that you treat SPH ships as CWs for this rule.
- 422.8 *This rule says all races can use one tug as a repair tug. What about the Romulan KRT, which we know from repeated statements in SFB has nothing but cargo pods? And what about the Freight Eagle, which doesn't have pods as such and no "repair sled" appears in SFB? Holy inconsistencies, Batman! Well, that's a contradiction with SFB so we'll fix it. Only the SPH can do it (your dedicated staff officers converted it to a Sparrowhawk-R) while the FE and KRT cannot. See (509.21) below. What about the new SFB rules allowing a tug to tow a freighter as a pod? They don't apply; there are a fixed number of repair ships, and those are already accounted for.*
- 430.21 *says that a PDU can garrison a province, but (430.25) and (508.15) say that it cannot. Which is it?* Two falls out of three; (430.21) is wrong. Apparently we changed our minds somewhere in the design phase and missed a reference.
- 430.24 *Does "occupies" mean you are in sole possession (i.e. have captured it) or that you are just occupying space in it*

(i.e. contesting it) or that you simply pass through it? This would apply if you had been in sole possession (i.e. have captured). If you were merely occupying space in (as opposed to a military occupation), this would be contesting and the original owner would resume full uncontested ownership (unless he retreated, or there was another contesting force, etc). Passing through does not change possession, of course, except for Neutral Zones.

- 431.32 *Can I overbuild a carrier if I put fewer fighters on it?* There is no provision for changing the number of fighter factors on the ship, so you can't put fewer fighter factors and the point becomes moot.
- 431.4 *Does "war" as used here mean "Full War" or "Full and Limited War"?* Full and limited war; see (652.21).
- 431.61 Reference to (432.63) should be to (431.63).
- 431.73 *This rule says that you can unconvert a carrier, but (433.21) says you cannot unconvert things to recover the money. Is that a contradiction?* Not really. You can unconvert a carrier group if you want standard warships, but this costs money, and since you don't get money back, it does not violate (433.21). *Where can un conversions be done?* At any SB (must be at capital SB if 4 points or more). *Can you unconvert a carrier group with some ships missing or damaged?* Certainly, but the corresponding resulting ships will also be, correspondingly, missing or damaged. *Can you unconvert non-carriers?* See (751.0) below.
- 431.74 *Can you accumulate these free fighter factors from turn to turn?* No, you cannot. *Where are they delivered?* Only at the capital shipyard. *Do you stop accumulating them if the capital is captured?* Yes, until you build a new shipyard.
- 431.8 *Boy, you guys are gonna kill us for this, but yep, it's "%\$\*#@ Addenda. It seems that there is no actual RULE to define substitutions. In order to have a reference number for questions on the subject, we have created this rule number for the subject of substitutions. None of these are actually "new" rules, but they are a compilation of rules suggested, implied, or stated elsewhere. A few points: The substitutions listed in each race's Order of Battle are the only substitutions allowed. As it says in the Tactical Note on page 37 of the rulebook, if you substitute, you pay the basic cost as calculated by (432.0) and not the cost of the original hull plus the conversion. You can substitute a ship for a ship on the original production list or for an overbuilt ship, as per (431.3) and within the limits given there. Many substitutions come with limits on how many times they can be done and on when they can be done.*
- 432.24 *I have 317 questions about the Hydran exception. First.... If we promise to do a chart showing the cost of all Hydran carriers, can you hold up on those questions for now? Oh, all right I guess.*
- 433.21 *Can you unconvert something for reasons other than recovering the cost of conversion?* Maybe in Total War; see (751.0) below.
- 432.41 *This rule says that a scout costs 3 points more than the base hull, but (751) is full of frigate-scouts that can be converted for 2 points. What gives?* Rats! We set 3 points as the standard, then decided that was too expensive for the little-scouts after looking at the Total War EW rules. Ok, since there is a contradiction between this and (751), use the conversion costs in (751) instead of the blanket 3-point surcharge. Also, the surcharge was intended to cover unlisted ships and is included in the (751) chart.
- 433.11 *Can a crippled starbase make conversions? How about Romulan modular conversions?* Sorry, but the rule clearly says "each uncrippled starbase" and that should be clear enough. If crippled starbases could do it (perhaps over more time or at a higher cost), it would say so. In the old

days a question like this would have provoked rules changes or perhaps a new rule on crippled starbases. With the new "addendaless" system, we have the moral strength to just let the rule stand the way we originally wrote it.

- 433.17 *Does this mean that any race, including the Klingons and the Federation, would have to have two or three starbases in the capital to make full use of (433.15) and (433.16)?* Yes, you have two limits. The number you are allowed (or buy), and the number of starbases you have to do them with. You can buy an extra major conversion, but if there isn't a starbase there, you can't use it, so buy the starbase first. It's going to be a long war.
- 433.17 *Can the Gorns and Romulans use the starbases in their other capital hexes for major conversions?* Sorry, but (511.1) establishes that the Gorns and Romulans have only one capital-shipyard hex.
- 433.21 *Does this rule prohibit all unconversions?* See (751.0) in the commentaries (below).
- 433.41 *I am confused by the term "based on the original factors." Shouldn't this be the "upgraded" factors?* It is the upgraded factors; we meant the original factors on the counter for the new class of base. Sorry for confusion.
- 436.23 This should say "...with only two points..."
- 436.33 *Can an incomplete B10 move out of the capital by operational movement and then retrograde to it? Would this slow completion of the ship?* Well, the rule says it can, but since (436.2) says you can do ONE of the listed options, if you use it in combat (option four) you can't work on it during the same turn even if you retrograde it back to the capital. *Would you lose 2 points from the running total if you used it in combat?* No, only if you store it. *If the capital is abandoned, can the incomplete battleship be taken to the new capital and finished there?* Certainly.

## 500 SPECIAL RULES

- 502.6 *The first paragraph indicates that there are free PFs for "all" bases and planets but (502.63) provides only a set number. What do we do?* Specific rules overrule general rules, so (502.63) governs. What happened was that we changed from the old "every base" system used in F&E86 to the set number system in F&E89 and forgot to change the introduction when we changed the rule.
- 502.61 *Can I deploy free PFs on bases that are cut off from the main supply grid?* No, those are all built on the capital and moved out (at no cost) from there. You could, of course, build PFs at any SB, BATS, or PDU.
- 502.65 *Does the Federation get unlimited free fighters or are they limited like the PFs?* They use the same deployment limits as (502.62) and (502.63). This is why the Feds are listed on the (600.2) chart.
- 502.8 The Orion can produce PFs for his PFTs.
- 503.13 *Could this rule (involving paying the enemy to allow one of your interned ships to be released) be used as a general bribery rule by "arranging" to have one of your ships interned so that, for example, the Kzintis could pay the Klingons 100 EPs not to invade?* Any such use would, obviously, be an abuse of the rules. To prevent such abuse, we'll have to use the "loophole plug" condition: bribes cannot exceed the cost of the ship released, and no more than one ship can be ransomed per turn.
- 503.33 Reference to (511.7) should be to (411.7).
- 503.4 *Why is option 4 (send ship to another neutral and later arrange an exchange) prohibited?* No reason it should be; we must have just missed it. Do it with local agreement.
- 503.6 *When the Federation 4th Fleet goes to help the Kzintis, does it "capture" the Neutral Zone hexes it moves through?* Sorry, but no. The Feds cannot capture anything while not

at war, and the NZ hexes between those races must remain uncaptured as a buffer. Ref (301.7) should be (301.74).

- 503.63 *Is the delivery of a BTN considered an upgrade (functions immediately) or delivery (functions next turn)?* The rule says to use delivery (508.32), so the tug has to stay and set it up and it functions next turn.
- 503.64 *To hold and receive income from hexes adjacent to the Tholians, do you have to keep a ship there?* Sorry for the confusing way that rule is written. Use (503.62) in that case.
- 504.3 *At what rate do Orions pay for their repairs?* Orions don't have repair ships, so they use secret bases for repairs and pay what anyone else would pay for repairs at bases. There is currently no limit on how many repairs they can perform; we'll see if one needs to be added in Total War.
- 504.4 *Do the fighters and PFs of the ships count?* Yes.
- 508.21 *Must the 10 points be scored in a single battle round or can they be accumulated?* They can be scored in several battle rounds of the same Player Turn, but partial devastation is "repaired" automatically between turns unless you completely devastate it.
- 508.23 *Can one ship garrison an entire capital hex with many systems and planets? Shouldn't this be one ship per planet? or at least per system?* Well, it might seem logical, but we promised not to mess with the rules, and the rule says that the hex must be garrisoned, not the planet or system, so one ship can do it. Strange as it may seem, one PDU (even one without fighters!) on one of those planets garrisons all of them. This is ridiculous, of course, but we did promise not to keep "fixing" the rules. Purists who want a "perfect" set of rules at the cost of addenda can assume that one ship or PDU per planet would be required, but that would have to be a local rule requiring majority consent. It should have been one per planet.
- 508.231 Reference to (508.31) should be to (508.3).
- 508.231 *Can you deliver a PDU on the same Player Turn that you captured the planet?* No, you have to capture it first.
- 508.34 Reference (510.11) should be (510.12).
- 509.21 *Can the Romulan KRT and FE do repair missions?* Well, in SFB they can't, so we'll have to add "J" to the list of prohibited missions. See (422.8) above.
- 510.12 *Is a non-deployed MB destroyed when the tug retreats?* No, it goes with the tug, unless the owner said that he was setting up the MB, in which case the MB is lost.
- 512.3 *Can a scout be used for EW support AND to pull a ship out of the web?* Well, maybe it shouldn't be possible, but it's not a critical item and, to avoid stepping on the slippery slope of adjusting the rules forever, we'll have to let that one pass. There is no rule to prevent it, so it can provide EW support and pull a ship out of the web. Given the amount of power needed and available, it probably could.

## 600 SCENARIOS

- 600.3 *When can an unavailable fleet be released?* As the various rules provide, release is never voluntary. Either the enemy that particular unreleased fleet is watching enters its deployment area (releasing it) or you declare war on that specific enemy (in which case you can invade him, he can invade you, and his fleet facing you will also be released by the act of your fleet entering his territory). In the historical game that's pretty cut and dried, but in a free campaign there could be some finagling. For example, the Feds and Romulans, both at war with the Gorns, could declare war on each other (but make only token attacks) in order to release an additional fleet each. Of course, once they are at war with each other, the Feds and Romulans could not combine in attacks, exchange economic points, use each other's strategic movement, host homeless fleets, run

expeditions through each other's territory, etc. Of course, once at war you could declare peace, and to prevent that sleazy nonsense, we'll provide a whole page of rules on unreleasing border fleets in Total War. We have warned players that the Free Campaign is going to create some loopholes that they'll have to resolve.

600.31 *Could a ship of an unreleased fleet use long-range reaction against a unit outside of its deployment area so long as it did not leave that deployment area?* Yes.

600.32 *While the Klingons cannot deploy PDUs, could they stockpile them for later deployment?* Fine with us. But if that is allowed, couldn't the Gorns stockpile dozens of the things and set them up on the capital in a flurry of public works constructions on turn 12? No, because the Gorns can't build them while at peace. The inactive races have set production and don't go through the process of collecting taxes and spending money. During these periods, the various races in question (Hydrans, Feds, Gorns, Roms) don't use the economic system; the fleet commanders just take what the government hands them.

600.33 *Shouldn't there be some limit on the class of ships used on piracy patrol? DNs are too expensive to run.* We said we wouldn't do addenda, so we won't change this (although it is ridiculous and the 6 ships should have a total of say, 50 combat factors).

601.0 *What year are the Hydrans "at war" for purposes of active fleets, converting ships, building bases, etc?* Turn 3, when they attack the Coalition. Sorry, but you don't get to build and convert for three turns before the bad guys jump all over you. They would take that as "warlike preparations" and attack at once.

601.12 *What does "create a state of limited war for the Federation" mean?* It means you made a BIG mistake. The 4th Fleet plays patty cake with your head, the Fed economy goes to 75% and they can accumulate unspent funds, and they can go to full war in four turns unless you pull out of Kzinti space. They also stop inviting your diplomats to embassy parties. And no, it does not release the IWR.

601.14 *What methods of movement can the Hydrans use to enter Federation space?* Well, obviously operational movement can be used. You can also retreat into Federation territory, and in fact the retreat priorities on always being allowed to enter neutral space (the Feds are a neutral future belligerent) give you a boost. You can't use strategic movement or retrograde because the Feds are not an ally (until you enter their space). You could enter by reaction movement, but that would mean that the Klingons had already invaded Fed space, and the point of bringing the Feds into the War would be moot. You could fight your way through Lyran territory and off-map through Kzinti space, then enter Federation space by off-map movement, but don't count on making it by turn 7. Still, the Kzintis might have broken through and built strategic movement bases right up to your border, and then you could... Nah.

601.15 *Can the Klingons do full wartime conversions at their starbases on turn 1?* Yes, they are at wartime economy. The problem is that "war" is used two ways in F&E, for both political and economic status. We'll have to do an article someday explaining just which is which.

601.4 *Why do crippled ships count as full ships for purposes of these victory conditions?* Because the war is over and we have to figure out who won. Once peace is declared, the crippled ships can all be repaired in a turn or two and that will determine the post-war balance of power.

602.2 Reference in first paragraph to (602.1) should be to (602.4). Fourth paragraph (sixth line) should read "...immediately IF both..." not "immediately OF both..."

602.4 *Is the Klingon Imperial War Reserve released if Klingon ships are fighting Fed ships in Kzinti territory under the Limited War rules?* No, it takes a full-blown war for that.

602.51 For your convenience, you can include a given carrier group entirely within a group of six ships.

603.3 *Is the economic base of the races adjusted for exhaustion?* No, because the war is over and we are trying to figure out who won. Wars are fought for long-term control of resources. After both sides recover, the one who holds more territory will be in a stronger position for the next war.

606.0 Hex 0902, Tug should be a TGT.

651.2 *Does the Tholian capital count for this?* If it did, it would say so. (Trust us.) If you DO capture the Tholian capital, you will earn the undying respect of all F&E players and probably lose the war due to massive casualties. Please let us know if (and how) you manage it.

652.0 *Would the unexplored Romulan provinces mentioned in (603.15) still be unexplored?* They certainly would. The Romulan player will have to explore them. Other players could capture (but not explore) them starting turn 10, but this will be considered to be "invading" Romulan territory.

652.25 *Is Neutral Zone territory considered "friendly" or "enemy" for purposes of this rule?* Neither. It is "neutral" territory. It counts as ships outside of home territory, so you can't be at peace, but does not count as enemy territory, so you don't have to be at war. We should have explained it a bit better, but we thought that the term "neutral zone" had it covered.

653.0 General B: *Is this one per turn or one per game?* How did we miss that. Once per turn of course.

653.0 Federation B: *Do you mean (in the second part) to spread the ships between turns 5 and 6 or that you get them on both 5 AND 6?* You get them on both turn 5 and turn 6, paying +4 for each turn.

653.0 Romulan C: *If the Romulans pick option C (no K4Rs), do the ships go into the Klingon mothball fleet?* Oops, it seems we really messed up here. The rules don't say for them to do that, and it would give the Klingons an advantage at no cost, so the ships just sail into Limbo. Assume that the Tholians destroyed them en route.

## 700 ORDERS OF BATTLE, ANNEXES

701.0 *Can you substitute for a substitute? For example, if you can substitute a CA for a DN and a Tug for a CA, can you substitute a Tug for a DN?* Probably. We'll have to check this ship-by-ship and give you a comprehensive list in Total War. A quick check didn't find anything that would be a problem.

702.0 *Shouldn't Fed starbases have extra fighters to account for the F-14s.* Maybe. We'll do something about that in *Total War Part XIV: Trivial Wars*. Before anyone asks, the extra 6th Fleet ships (in the CL6 story) are new construction.

703.0 *Can the Klingons build or upgrade bases in 1707, 1807, 1808, and/or 1708 before the Eastern Fleet is released.* These hexes are in the territory of both the Eastern and Northern Fleets. Rats! And after we went to so much trouble to eliminate fleet overlaps in the Federation. Guess we just missed that one. We could ignore it and let each group work it out with a house rule, but then no two groups would do it the same and someone would complain that his game didn't work because of it. Ok, 1707 and 1708 are in the Northern Fleet Zone and 1807 and 1808 are in the Eastern Fleet Zone. Sorry for the inconvenience.

703.0 *The Klingons have no PFT pods listed!* Oh crud. How did we miss that? Of course they can build two like everyone else, and like the old rules. Sorry for the errata.

704.0 *Can the Romulans convert NHs to SUPs in addition to these limits?* No, these are "by any means" limits.

- 704.0 *What happens if the Romulans go to war early?* You can switch to the wartime production rates on turn 4 or later. You will have to use (652.4) Klingon Delivery.
- 704.0 *Can the Romulans use the full range of substitutions and conversions during the pre-war construction period?* Yes and no. The Romulan pre-war production is pretty much set and reflects the maximum that they could build. No conversions or substitutions are allowed (except for those WE/KE conversions listed, and of course adapting newly arrived Klingon ships to plasma technology). You may, if you wish, substitute old-series standard warships (but only as a means of stretching the limited supply of counters), but you cannot substitute non-standard ships (i.e. no maulers, sorry guys). All of the SPs and SKs (except where noted) are standard types; conversion of these must wait until the War begins. (Production of three SPCs is specifically authorized.)
- 705.0 Kzintis can use CM or CL in the CVA substitution.
- 706.0 *What happens if the Gorns go to war early?* They can use their wartime construction rates starting on turn 4 if actually at war, but cannot build DNs before turn 6. And don't worry about them not having fighters until Y173 (as per the chart in SFB) as we have given them access to fighters before that date in Doomsday.
- 709.0 *Do Hydran carrier escorts (e.g. DE, NEC) pay 1 or 2 points per fighter factor?* Neither, really. These units use the Hydran exception (432.24) unless they are true carriers listed in (757.5). *Can you substitute RNs for DGs and LNs for KNs and vice versa?* No, the production schedule is designed to produce one fusion and one hellbore ship of each class per year. You can convert them, of course. Some production decisions were already made for you by the Bureaucracy. (The unions that work in the fusion factories have an iron-clad contract.)
- 711.0 *The STT is listed as available from Y170 in one place and not before Y171 in another. Which is it?* Hmm. That's a contradiction, so we're allowed to fix it. Y170 sounds right.
- 711.0 *What about the repair of Lyrans ships by the LDR mentioned in Star Fleet Battles (R14.1B-C)?* We'll do that when we add the LDR to F&E.
- 751.0 Lyrans CVL: *The conversion lists an FF but (757) lists a DW. So is the cost of converting an FF to a DW included in the conversion cost?* Oops. We originally had the CVL group using an FF escort, then decided that we would use "war" ships in that group and changed (757) to a DW. Someone forgot to go back to the (751) chart and change FF to DW, which it should be.
- 751.0 Reverse Conversions: *Can you convert a variant back into the basic hull for the cost listed? Or for a nominal one-point cost? Can you convert one variant to another? for what cost?* There is no single answer because it depends on the specific case. You could convert a "minor-change variant" (e.g. a drone ship) into a different "minor-change variant" (e.g. a scout) and vice versa, but how do you define "minor change?" You cannot define it in terms of cost; it must be defined in terms of the changes to the SSD in Star Fleet Battles. No blanket rule can cover every idea. The final answer is that this is going to have to be done on a case-by-case basis, with every possible reverse and cross-variant-conversion listed. Because that would produce a mammoth chart cluttered with conversions no one ever wanted to do, we'll have to be selective. Such an extensive project is inappropriate to commentaries; we'll have to work it out for the new (751.0) chart in Total War. Any suggestions, questions, or comments on specific cases will be helpful. Don't try to think of new (but useless) conversions just to clutter the list, but if there is a

conversion you really wanted to be able to do, let us know and we'll put the price on the list.

- 751.0 Romulan SPE: *The cost of converting an SPC scout to an SPE PFT is 5 points. That doesn't seem fair as I can convert an SPA for the same money, and the SPC already has the sensors!* Yes, but those sensors are in different modules. It would cost as much to rebuild the modules or transfer the sensors as building new ones. Pay the 5 points. At least you'll have a spare set of C modules afterwards.
- 751.0 Kzinti CVA conversion is wrong. See below.
- 751.0 Hydran carriers. *If converting a ship that already has fighters to a carrier, how do you pay the fighter costs?* Take credit for the one point per fighter already paid, and pay the second point (carrier rates).
- 752.0 *The Lyrans Cougar Tug is listed for the discount price, but that is the combat version. Don't you mean the Puma (TGP)?* This presents a moral dilemma. Any SFB player knows that the Puma is the non-combat cheap tug, but we promised not to mess with the rules. I guess we can say that this is a contradiction (with SFB) which allows us to fix it. Yes, it should be the TGP here.
- 757.2 Tholian BW Equivalent Hull is PC, not DD.

## (751.0) ADDITIONAL CONVERSIONS

These items are additional conversions that will be listed in Total War, but are listed here as an advance preview:

Fed NCD.....	to NSC .....	3 pts
Kzinti DN + 2xCM + 1xFF ....	to CVA .....	5 pts
(Kzinti CL can be substituted for CM)		
Gorn SC .....	to BDS .....	2 pts
Gorn DD .....	to BDS .....	4 pts
Lyrans CA.....	to TGP .....	4 pts
Lyrans SC.....	to CWS.....	3 pts
Lyrans PFT.....	to PFW.....	3 pts
Tholian CA + PC.....	to DN.....	5 pts

## ERRORS IN THE INDEX

Item .....	Listed .....	Should be
Battle Station .....	501.1 .....	433.41
Crippled Units .....	308.1 .....	301.8
Retreat, Cannot .....	302.76 .....	302.74
Starbases .....	501.1 .....	433.41

## INDEX OF HIDDEN RULES

There are some rules that ARE in the rulebook but are in an odd or out-of-the way place. We have listed them here for your convenience.

Accumulate EPs.....	431.4
Crippled Bases lose repair capabilities .....	420.62
Economic Exhaustion.....	652.3
ISC, Neutral Zone hexes next to .....	503.2
Neutral Zone hexes next to ISC .....	503.2
Substitutions.....	431.8
Unconverting carrier groups.....	431.73
Partial Supply Grids .....	413.4

We'll add these to the charts, annexes, and index in Total War Part I: Carrier War. ooo

## MORE FEDERATION & ENQUIRE

### TOO TIRED TO COLLECT

Q804F: If the Klingons become economically exhausted, is the territory they have captured from other races, and any occupied Neutral Zone territory, also exhausted?

A: Yes. ooo

## (684.0) THE WAYWARD WIND

(Coalition War Plan 2A)

Steven P Petrick

This scenario depicts a variation of the first three years of the General War (a period of six turns) in which the Coalition initiated the conflict by attacking the Hydrans first, rather than the Kzintis. This is the period before the Federation became involved. The Klingons and Lyrans were attempting to permanently eliminate the Hydrans and Kzintis as significant powers. Use the standard Orders of Battle from section (700.0) Annexes. All new production ships are available.

### (684.1) SCENARIO NOTES

(684.11) Klingon Eastern Fleet is not released unless a Kzinti or Hydran unit enters a Klingon province which is adjacent to the Federation Neutral Zone. The Klingons can begin activating mothball ships on Turn 1.

(684.12) Kzinti Marquis Fleet may move freely after the Klingons enter Kzinti territory, but must leave six ships from the original fleet, including a Command Cruiser, in the two provinces adjacent to the Federation Neutral Zone. These ships (and the Federation 4th Fleet) are released if a Coalition (or Orion mercenary hired by the Coalition) unit enters either of those provinces. This condition does not apply on Turn 7 (if this variation is being used to play the entire General War) or later. This will create a state of Limited War for the Federation. All Kzinti ships interned by the Federation are released.

(684.13) Forces listed as available may move anywhere in that race's territory and in the territory of races with which it is at War. Forces which are "released" become available.

(684.14) If Hydrans enter Federation territory, the Federation joins the Alliance (as it normally would on Turn 7 if this variation is being used to play the entire General War). If the Hydrans enter Federation territory (Turn 6 or before) during the Coalition turn, the Federation is at 75% on that turn and 100% on the next and all thereafter. If the Hydrans enter Federation territory on an Alliance turn, the Federation is at 50% on that turn, 75% on the next turn, and 100% on the next turn and thereafter.

(684.15) Initially the Hydran, Lyran, and Klingon forces are on the board. These races build ships and maneuver their units as per the rules. Also set up the Federation 4th Fleet. (Note: You can set up all of the forces for all players if you wish. This will, however, take considerable time and, unless Pirates are operating, is not actually necessary even if this variation is being used to play the entire General War).

During the Alliance half of Turn 3, the Kzintis set up their ships and add any ships produced (according to the schedule) on Turns 1 and 2. They do not complete an Economic Form for those turns, do not pay for the ships, and cannot accumulate unspent Economic Points. The Kzintis become fully functional on Turn 3, complete an Economic Form, build ships, and may accumulate unspent Economic Points and/or use overbuilds from that time and not before.

The Klingons (on Turn 1) can move their new production ships within their own territory. These are the only Klingon ships able to move on Turn 1. The Klingons are considered to be on a Wartime economy, but not at War or allied, on Turn 1 (e.g. they produce and build at wartime rates but cannot operate survey ships).

Set up in this order: Lyran, Hydran, Klingon.

### (684.2) SCENARIO SCHEDULE

#### TURN 1, FALL Y168

Event: Lyrans invade Hydran territory.

Lyran are not required to attack. Hydrans may attack.

LYRAN Forces Available: Southern Fleet, Home Fleet.

HYDRAN Forces Available: Second, Expeditionary, Home Fleets. Ships from the forces in 0215 and 0716 can be designated as Reserves at start at the option of the Hydran player. See (709.0) for the release of the Old Colonies Squadron.

KLINGONS are on a "wartime" economy (684.15); all fleets are inactive. See (503.4) Future Belligerents.

#### TURN 2, SPRING Y169

Event: Klingons invade Hydran territory.

Klingons not required to attack. Hydrans may attack.

LYRAN Forces Available: As above, plus Far Stars arrives by (204.39), entering at 0109 or 0104.

KLINGON Forces Available: Western Fleet, Southern Reserve Fleet. Tholian Border Squadron is released and can move by Strategic Movement. The deployment area of the TBS is added to Eastern Fleet; Eastern Fleet ships may move into that area; any invasion of that area activates the Eastern Fleet.

HYDRAN Forces Available: As above, plus First Fleet.

#### TURN 3, FALL Y169

Event: Kzintis attack Klingons and Lyran.

Kzintis are not required to attack. Klingons and/or Lyran cannot attack Kzintis. If Kzintis do not attack, released Coalition Forces available against the Hydrans.

LYRAN Forces Available: All Lyran Forces are available.

KLINGON Forces Available: All except Eastern Fleet and Home Fleet. Home Fleet is released if the Kzintis destroy a Klingon base or the Hydrans enter Klingon territory.

KZINTI Forces Available: All except for six designated ships from Marquis Fleet.

HYDRAN Forces Available: As above.

#### TURN 4, SPRING Y170

Klingons-Lyran can attack Hydrans and/or Kzintis.

LYRAN Forces Available: All.

KLINGON Forces Available: All except East Fleet.

KZINTI Forces Available: All except six ships from Marquis.

HYDRAN Forces Available: As above.

#### TURN 5, FALL Y170: Same as Turn 4.

#### TURN 6, SPRING Y171: Same as Turn 4.

### (684.3) SCENARIO LENGTH

The scenario ends after six turns.

### (684.4) VICTORY CONDITIONS

To win any level of victory, the Coalition (Lyran-Klingon) must have more total ships than the Alliance (Hydran-Kzinti) and more total attack factors including fighters on those ships. Also, the Lyran and Klingon capitals must not be held by Alliance Forces. In addition:

**DECISIVE VICTORY:** The Coalition captures both the Kzinti and Hydran capitals and holds them at the end of the scenario.

**MAJOR VICTORY:** The total Alliance economy is 75 points or less, and the Coalition has destroyed 25 Alliance BATS.

**TACTICAL VICTORY:** The total Alliance economy is 90 points or less, and Coalition has destroyed 20 Alliance BATS.

**ALLIANCE VICTORY:** Any other result is Alliance victory.

To count destroyed Alliance battle stations, take the total number of destroyed, minus the number of Coalition battle stations destroyed. Count each starbase (Alliance or Coalition) as three battle stations. Each newly built base (except those off-map) offsets one identical destroyed base. Count crippled ships and all bases as "ships" for purposes of the totals. **000**



## (654.0) LYRAN OPTIONS

The Lyrans are a fascinating race for many reasons: their convertible ships, their unique political structure, their two-front war, and the Lyran Democratic Republic, among others. These options explore some of the political and historical alternatives for the Lyrans.

**(654.1) RATIONAL DN CONSTRUCTION (+3):** Assume that the Lyrans had produced DNs in a logical way instead of hurriedly at the last minute. Add 1xCC, 1xCL, 1xDD, and 1xFF in province 0408 to represent the Home Fleet ships that weren't converted to trimarans. Leave the existing trimarans alone. — *Stewart Frazier.*

**(654.2) NO TRIMARANS (-5):** The DN, BC, CW, and DW counters are still used, but these represent new classes, not conversions of existing ships. Conversions to trimarans are not allowed, but trimarans can be built from scratch. — *Stewart Frazier.*

**(654.3) LDR RECONCILIATION (+4):** Assume that the LDR had rejoined the Lyran Empire on some basis before receiving gatling technology. The LDR province (0811) is treated as a Lyran Province, not as neutral territory. The LDR fleet includes 1xCA, 1xCL, 1xDD, 1xFF. These ships must be set up within province 0811, and no other Lyran ships can be set up there initially to reflect the still touchy relations. — *Stewart Frazier.*

**(654.4) THE SOUTHERN NEUTRALS (+6):** The Enemy's Blood Duchy (0109, 0111, 0310, 0312) declares itself neutral, wanting no part of the war with the Kzintis. The following rules apply: Ships of the EBD cannot leave the EBD. Income from the EBD can be used by the main Lyrans or by the EBD. The EBD is at the same economic level as the other Lyrans. Lyran ships can be sent to the EBD for conversion and repair. The EBD will not become "active" unless the Hydrans attack the EBD or the LDR or unless the Kzintis (or Feds for that matter) attack the Lyran capital. — *Stewart Frazier.*

**(654.5) NOT SO FAR STARS (+2):** One province of the Far Stars Duchy area is actually on the map (0103). Allow the Lyrans to place one CA, one CL, one DD, and one FF from the Far Stars Fleet in this area. — *Stewart Frazier.*

**(654.6) EARLY TRIMARANS (+4):** Allow the Lyrans to convert one CA to a DN and one CL to a BC before turn 1. These must be in different duchies. This option can be used no more than twice. — *Steven Petrick.*

**(654.7) EARLY MAULERS (+4):** Assume that the Klingons provided mauler technology to the Lyrans sooner. Lyrans can begin conversion or construction of maulers on turn 1. (Note that the Roms invented the mauler, but the Klingons were the first on this side of the galaxy to import it and would have to be the ones to provide it to the Lyrans). — *Steven Petrick.*

**(654.8) PREWAR BASES (+8):** Place a Lyran battle station in 1208 and another in 1708. These can be used to support operations against the Kzintis and Feds. — *Steven Petrick.*

**(654.9) EARLY CARRIERS (+20):** Historically, the Lyrans did not begin carrier production until much later. For this non-historical option, add one CVL to the Home, Far Stars, and Enemy's Blood fleets and one CV to the Red Claw (North) fleet. Allow CV and CVL substitutions from turn 1 rather than the normal wait to Y171-2. — *Steven Petrick.*

**(654.10) FORTIFIED BORDERS (+10):** The Lyrans attempt to fight a one-front war. Replace the BATS in 0212 and 0413 with starbases. The Lyrans cannot attack the Hydrans unless the Hydrans attack the Lyrans or LDR. — *Owen Riley.*

**(654.11) CRUISER PRODUCTION (+10):** The Lyrans, like the Feds and Klingons, are a very powerful race. This could be reflected by adding one CA to the Spring and Fall production schedules, matching the Federation and Klingon cruiser production. As an option, this can be done for no cost if the schedule is changed to 1xDN (BC), 2xCA, 2xCW, 2xDW, 3xFF. — *Owen Riley.*

**(654.12) THE LYRAN BLITZ (+20):** This entails better Lyran pre-war planning for an initial assault on the Kzintis. Add one Spring turn of production to the initial Lyran OB anywhere (this was built on turn 0). The Lyran player actually buys the ships he wants, including overproduction, based on the availability of 86 EPs during a regular Lyran Spring production phase. This corresponds to the Klingon ships built on turn 1 (the turn before they go to war). — *Steve Rossi.*

**MORE OPTIONS:** Send any you think of to ADB!

○○○

## (655.0) NO THOLIANS OPTION

by Steven P Petrick.

When the Tholians arrived in our galaxy, they occupied what had long been Klingon territory at the tip of their spiral arm. This created a galacto-political dynamic that would have long-term effects on the galaxy. What would the General War have been like without this roadblock on the Klinshai-Remus route? This optional rule will allow you to find out.

**(655.1) THOLIAN FLEET:** Delete the Tholian fleet. It never arrived. There is no Tholian production or 312th fleet.

**(655.2) PROVINCES:** The eight hexes of the Tholian Holdfast and the four Neutral Zone hexes comprise two Klingon provinces. One includes 2617, 2618, 2619, 2718, and 2719. The other includes 2818, 2819, 2918, 2919, 3018, 3019, 3119.

**(655.3) BASES:** Delete the starbase in 2819 and the BATS in 2818 and 3018. The starbase in 3019 and the BATS in 3119, 2918, and 2719 are Klingon bases.

**(655.4) PLANET:** Delete the Tholian homeworld. In that hex is the minor planet Kalesta, a Klingon colony world. This is the colony which the Federation never asked the Tholians about.

**(655.5) DEPLOYMENT:** Move the Tholian Border Squadron into the two new provinces, and turn over their original deployment area to the East Fleet. This group then becomes the Romulan Border Squadron and is NOT available to redeploy on turn 1 as it historically was. The Federation 7th Fleet is released immediately if the Klingons attack the Federation.

**(655.6) BALANCE:** Using this option costs the Klingons 30 balance points under (653.0). However, this option should be used with mutual consent as an experiment; it cannot be freely selected by the Klingons without prior consent. ○○○

Hope you enjoyed this huge F&E section. We'll be back next time with more strategic excitement.—*OGRiley* ○○○

[illegible]

PROBES 5

BOARDING PARTIES	TRANSPORTER BOMBS
<div> <div></div> <div></div> <div></div> <div></div> <div>6</div> </div>	<div> <div></div> <div></div> <div>D</div> <div>D</div> </div>

SHIP DATA TABLE	
TYPE	= FFB
POINT VALUE	= 90
BREAKDOWN	= 4-6
SHIELD COST	= 1/2+1/2
LIFE SUPPORT	= 1/2
SIZE CLASS	= 4
REFERENCE	= R2.50

DIE ROLL	RANGE	6-9-16-26-51-75			
		0	1	2	3
1	9	8	7	6	5
2	8	7	6	5	4
3	7	5	4	4	3
4	6	4	4	4	3
5	5	4	4	4	3
6	4	4	3	3	2

TURN MODE		SPEED
C	1	2-4
	2	5-9
	3	10-14
HET	4	15-20
	5	21-27
BD	6	28+

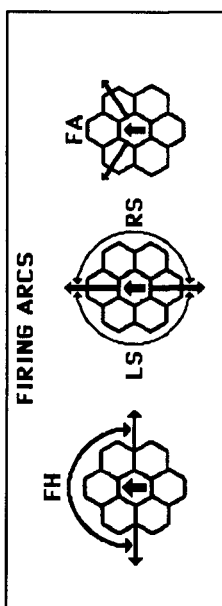
TYPE III DEFENSE PHASER						
DIE ROLL	RANGE			4- 9- 3 8 15		
	0	1	2	3	8	15
1	4	4	4	3	1	1
2	4	4	4	2	1	0
3	4	4	4	1	0	0
4	4	4	3	0	0	0
5	4	3	2	0	0	0
6	3	3	1	0	0	0

PHOTON TORPEDO TABLE						
RANGE	0-1	2	3-4	5-8	9-12	13-30
HIT, STD	NA	1-5	1-4	1-3	1-2	1
HIT, PROX	NA	NA	NA	NA	1-4	1-3
HIT, OVERLOAD	1-6	1-5	1-4	1-3	NA	NA
DAMAGE, STD	NA	8	8	8	8	8
DAMAGE, PROX	NA	NA	NA	NA	4	4
DNGE, OVERLOAD	-----	VARIES-----				
					NA	NA

DRONE RACK 6

**CRACK HAD THREE RELOADS.  
THIRD RELOAD MUST BE ADDS.**

ANTI-DRONE TABLE				
RANGE	0	1	2	3 4+
HIT*	-	1-2	1-3	1-4 -



WARP ENERGY MOVEMENT COST = 1/2 ENERGY POINT PER HEX															⑤ = HET COST										⑥ = ERRATIC MANEUVER WARP COST									
SPEED		1	2	3	4	⑤	⑥	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30			
Standard	1	1	2	2	3	3	3	4	4	5	5	6	6	7	7	8	8	9	9	10	10	11	11	12	12	13	13	14	14	15	15			
Fract.	1/2	1	1 1/2	2	2 1/2	3	3 1/2	4	4 1/2	5	5 1/2	6	6 1/2	7	7 1/2	8	8 1/2	9	9 1/2	10	10 1/2	11	11 1/2	12	12 1/2	13	13 1/2	14	14 1/2	15	15			

# FEDERATION WAR DESTROYER

CREW UNITS							ADMINISTRATIVE SHUTTLES					
			*				IDENT	HIT POINTS	NOTES			
						10						
						20						

PROBES

SHIP DATA TABLE	
TYPE	= DW
POINT VALUE	= 97
BREAKDOWN	= 5-6
SHIELD COST	= 1/2+1/2
LIFE SUPPORT	= 1/2
SIZE CLASS	= 4
REFERENCE	= R2.943

DIE ROLL	RANGE		5			6-9-16-26-51-			75		
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	9	8	7	6	5	5	4	3	2	1	1
2	8	7	6	5	5	4	3	2	1	1	0
3	7	5	5	4	4	4	3	1	0	0	0
4	6	4	4	4	4	3	2	0	0	0	0
5	5	4	4	4	3	3	1	0	0	0	0
6	4	4	3	3	2	2	0	0	0	0	0

TURN MODE		SPEED
C	1	2-4
	2	5-9
	3	10-14
HET	4	15-20
	5	21-27
BD	6	28+

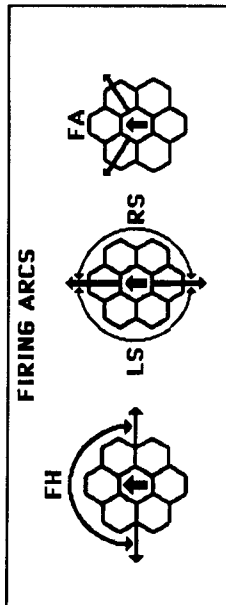
TYPE III DEFENSE PHASE					
DIE ROLL	RANGE		4- 9- 3 8 15		
	0	1	2	3	8
1	4	4	4	3	1
2	4	4	4	2	1
3	4	4	4	1	0
4	4	4	4	0	0
5	4	4	3	0	0
6	4	3	2	0	0
	3	3	1	0	0

PHOTON TORPEDO TABLE						
RANGE	0-1	2	3-4	5-8	9-12	13-30
HIT, STD	NA	1-5	1-4	1-3	1-2	1
HIT, PROX	NA	NA	NA	NA	1-4	1-3
HIT, OVERLOAD	1-6	1-5	1-4	1-3	NA	NA
DAMAGE, STD	NA	8	8	8	8	8
DAMAGE, PROX	NA	NA	NA	NA	4	4
DNGE, OVERLOAD	-----	VARIES	-----	-----	NA	NA

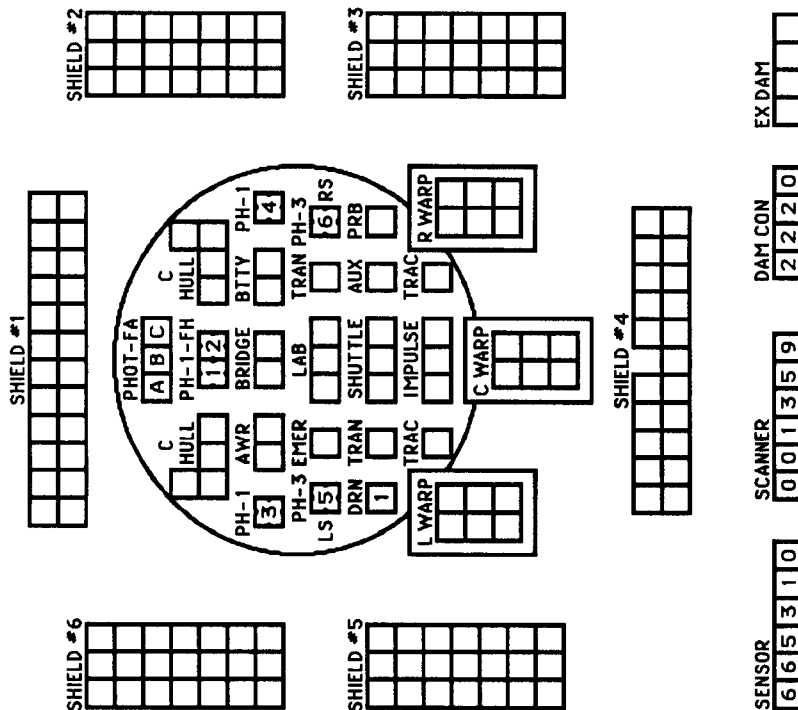
DRONE RACK									
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10











































TRACK HAD THREE RELOADS.  
THIRD RELOAD MUST BE ADDS.



ANTI-DRONE TABLE					
RANGE	0	1	2	3	4+
HITS	-	1-2	1-3	1-4	-



WARP ENERGY MOVEMENT COST = 1/2 ENERGY POINT PER HEX														⑤ = HET COST										⑥ = ERRATIC MANEUVER WARP COST									
SPEED		1	2	3	4	⑤	⑥	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30		
Standard	1	1	2	2	3	3	3	4	4	5	5	6	6	7	7	8	8	9	9	10	10	11	11	12	12	13	13	14	14	15	15		
Fract.	1/2	1	1 1/2	2	2 1/2	3	3 1/2	4	4 1/2	5	5 1/2	6	6 1/2	7	7 1/2	8	8 1/2	9	9 1/2	10	10 1/2	11	11 1/2	12	12 1/2	13	13 1/2	14	14 1/2	15			



FED		KLINGON		KZINTI		ROMULAN		
DW 1 	4SCS 24   25-30	4C8S 6P   24-29	4SCS  6P   25-30	MSC ◆  5-7 	4TH 6P   26-27	SEH 4 	SEH 4 	SEH 4 
DW 2 	4SCS 6P   31  	4LP 9P   21-26	4SCS 6P    33  	MSC ◆  5-7 	4PHX 6P    30 	SEC ◆  2-4 	2SHB 3   8  	3SEH    12

FED		LYRAN		HYDRAN		GORN		KZINTI		ROMULAN		
SEH	SEH	SEH	4TH	MSC	4SCS	4C8S	4SCS	FB 3				
3P				3P		3P	12					
2	2	2	14-15	2-4	12-16	12-16	11-16					
3SEH	2SHB	SEC	4PHX	MSC	4SCS	4LP	4SCS	FB 4				
1				3P		4P	3P					
6	4	0-2	17	2-4	17	11-13	16					

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Included In Captain's Log #8



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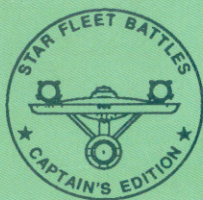
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