

STAR FLEET ALERT

1 MARCH 2011

THE ROAD TO ORIGINS

Steve Cole reports on the company's plans for the first half of 2011.

Looking at the schedule, I'm excited by what we're going to be doing and terrified at how much work there is. With good people helping me, however, we'll get it done. While this does add up to an impressive TEN major products, one of them is already finished, another is being done by a reliable outside contractor, and major elements of several others are already finished. Few game companies will produce five major products in an entire YEAR!

During January, we released the *Revision Six* edition of the *Federation Commander Reference Rulebook*. That has triggered a series of work projects. As we run out of each *Fed Commander* product, I am told by Leanna to drop everything and get the rulebook for that product updated. This doesn't take a lot of brain power, but it does take a bit of busy work. I have to open a copy of that rulebook, and start replacing chunks of it with things from *Reference Rulebook Revision Six*. The task is simple (takes an hour or two per product) and I have already done *Klingon Border* and *War & Peace*. (One challenge in *W&P* was that it got half a page longer, so two pages are now in a slightly smaller type size, but still larger than *SFB* products.) These projects can get mentally confusing as the *Revision Five* copy of any given product and the *Revision Six* copy of the *Reference Rulebook* often look almost identical, and if I get interrupted in the middle of a book, I can find myself accidentally reversing the processing, copying *Revision Five* stuff backward into *Revision Six*. To avoid this, I

have added huge "just off the page" colored markers to the *Revision Six* book so that I know which one I am looking at. I also decided to add the "star that marks changes" to the sidebars so that everyone can instantly tell what's *Revision Six*. As I write these words, Leanna is asking me for the *Revision Six* version of *Romulan Border*.

March will see the release of two much expected products, both of which are unique in their own way.

Star Fleet Battles Module C3A: Andromedan Threat File is a book of alternate rules and ships for the Andromedans, and is being compiled by Steven P. Petrick from many submissions and suggestions and a lot of his own ideas. The story is that this book compiles all of the incorrect guesses about what the Andromedans had or were about to create. As a product, it's challenging because three weeks from publication the contents list is still unfinished. Some things he's been working on for years just aren't working and will be dropped, while some other relatively new ideas are working and will be incorporated.

Federation Admiral is a campaign system done by Jay Waschak and his crew from *Victory By Any Means*. He's done campaign books for many games by many companies. I'm handling the page layout because it's tedious to convert from his file formats into ours. Jay's format will work with *Federation Commander*, *Star Fleet Battles*, and *Star Fleet Starmada*.

(Continued on page #2 of our first two-page Alert!)

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The April release is the one I am most excited about — *Star Fleet Marines: Assault*. This is the first of a new product line, showcasing the ground combat aspects of the *Star Fleet Universe*. Transporters, armored vehicles, ambushes, and lots more are included. The game rules are done, the countersheets are printed, and all I have to do is the scenarios and the map graphics. Being a ground combat guy in my military life, and a major player of the Panzerblitz game system, I've long wanted to see how ground combat works in the *SFU*.

May will see two major products, one of which is already finished and the other of which is the project we have the least amount of trouble with.

GURPS Federation: This is the fourth book in our series of licensed RPGs using the *GURPS* game engine. This book covers the United Federation of Planets. We cleverly do one (never published) book and then insert the data for each game system. The *PD20M* version of *Federation* has been on the market for months, and Steve Jackson has now approved the *GURPS* version. A major focus of the book is how colonies are found, surveyed, started, and grown into member planets. It includes complete surveys of all Federation member planets and surveys or notes on dozens of other planets. Also included are the deck plans for Star Fleet's *Burke*-class frigate, data on new weapons (such as the "phaser-Uzi"), new species (the ugly and doomed Fralli, the mysterious galactic rockhound Prellarians, the beautiful and seductive Deians, and the four-armed Brecons), and much more! I love this book because it is already 100% finished and won't get in the way of work on other projects, and yet it will be a major best seller.

Captain's Log #43 will be the next issue in our best-selling product series. These products are basically a gigantic fill-in-the-blank puzzle. We currently plan to fill in the fiction blank with a story that takes place at the same time as a classic Trek episode (and explains some mysteries nobody ever understood). We will fill in the blanks for *FC* ships and scenarios, *SFB* ships and scenarios, and all of the other blanks. Much of the work on this project is already well in hand.

The next product at that point is *Starship Aldo*. This is a sixteen-page booklet for Free RPG Day. We'll print 600 copies and send them to Aldo at Impressions Marketing. (Dozens of other companies will do the same thing, each printing a new book to be given away free.)

Starship Aldo (following last year's *Dread Pirate Aldo* and the earlier *Planet Aldo*) is designed to use either *GURPS* or *PD20M*. You find a wrecked starship. The paint on the side is burned, and you can make out the letters "aldo" but you do not know if this ship is the freighter *Geraldo Rivera*, the warship *Aguinaldo*, or the luxury cruise ship *Waldorf Astoria*. Finding out is only the first mystery you have to solve. Hard copy and PDF copies of *Starship Aldo* will be released for sale after Free RPG Day is over for those who don't have a participating store nearby.

Origins promises to be a huge blowout, with four major releases for as many different game systems.

Federation Commander: Transports Attacked is the next module in the *FC* game system covers tugs and light transports. Scenarios cover the battles they get into. This should be a fairly simple product to do. I just have to finish one card per week, and we're getting plenty of scenarios. We won't even need counters since those were already in *Hydran Attack*.

Federation & Empire: ISC War: The long-awaited expansion to *F&E* which brings in the first new empire in two decades. This will have extensive history and scenarios. We have just completed the Ship Information Table for this product. The rules are done, and the massive historical peacekeeping scenario is almost done. (The non-historical scenarios will all base off of the same Order of Battle and will be easy to do.)

Star Fleet Battles Module E3: Borak Star League: This "E-module" was done by one of our fans (Jeremy Gray, who in his spare time commands a US Navy destroyer) and describes a new empire (beyond the Lyrans and Hydrans). The Borak were wiped out before they could become a threat to anyone, but what a threat they might have been!

Distant Armada, the fourth book in our *Starmada* series, covering the Hydrans, Lyrans, and WYNs, is being done by Daniel Kast. Daniel does such incredibly good work that it's no panic adding this to the schedule, as the total work it will take me is about one day of page layout. This can use the counters or the miniatures packs from *Distant Kingdoms* and *Hydran Attack*.

I will post the fall plans in *Captain's Log #43* but we should see *FC Briefing #3* during the fall.