

CAPTAIN'S LOG #38: SUPPLEMENTAL FILE

A BOLD NEW EXPERIMENT

Whenever we do an issue of *Captain's Log*, we have some stuff left over. Some of it is not time critical and just goes into the next issue. Some of it *is* time critical and if not used is simply lost and wasted. And sometimes we have material from a particular category which is just too much to use, so we pick the best, discard the rest, and move along.

So, now the idea is to put such things into a "Supplemental" file and put it on the website and let you have it for free. We will even roll the recent idea of a "designer's notes" file into the new "supplemental" document. It's an experiment, and we may or may not do it again, or every time. There is concern that the next *Captain's Log* may be too close to Origins for us to find time to do a supplemental file. We shall see.

I must confess that this is not a new idea. Three decades ago, one of my favorite wargame magazines did the same thing, putting the surplus articles into a supplementary magazine.

PUBLISHER'S NOTES

This issue was a fun one to put together. They're all fun to put together, but we have gotten the system sufficiently organized (and enough pages done months ahead of time) that we could enjoy the fun parts without the blind panic of trying to do too much of it in the final month. By the time we were beyond the previous projects and could focus on *Captain's Log*, fully a third of it was more or less done another third of it existed as complete drafts.

So, let's walk through the issue and let me share some background or other thoughts about things. I may give you some inside information, and some of that might actually be interesting. I might even discuss a few things that did *not* get into this issue and a few that might be in the next one.—*Stephen V. Cole*

HISTORY

The signature font for this section is LB Helvetica Black, although we don't seem to use it for article titles. I'll have to look into that. While I am on the subject, I have noticed that we still haven't gotten the hang of the idea of using consistent title styles in *any* of the chapters. Some articles have the titles in all caps, some do not. Some subheadings are in all caps, some are not. Next time, we have *got* to establish and enforce how those should work so the whole book looks more professional.

Doomward and the Vortex: Michael C. Grafton's story had been in the file for a year. We liked the story but were wrestling with the implications and requirement of publishing it.

For one thing, it was impossible to do a scenario for it because it was impossible to write rules that put a player into the limited intelligence situation of the characters. Once you read the story, you simply knew too much to play the scenario.

Some players went crazy over the idea of wormholes, which they thought (incorrectly) would confirm and allow their ideas of moving the Hydran Fleet to Gorn space to attack the Romulans. No, these "vortexes" go somewhere, but it's not anywhere you

ever knew. It may be another time, another galaxy, another universe, but it's not anyplace on the *F&E* map. They don't last long enough to exploit, anyway.

I am told that one character in this story is a spoof of someone on the BBS, presumably all in good fun.

After the Ambush: This fiction story showed up in Email one day when I wasn't particularly busy (or didn't want to work on what I should have been working on). I read it for entertainment and found opportunities to add a few lines here and there to explain some background issues. After I edited it, this story stayed in the reserve file for far too long. It almost got used in *Captain's Log #37* until we did not have space.

Snapshots: We started doing these one-page articles a few issues ago. Players seem to like them, and I enjoy writing them. (I wrote Frequency and Myths of the Organians, as well as the Developmental History and Class History articles for this issue.)

Frequency is this issue's humor article. I had an idea to use the Midnight Shamadingdong bit but had no idea where or how to fit it in. The Imus thing was the same, a subplot in search of an article. I hit upon the idea of making them snippets of overheard radio shows, and when I needed a third one to fill it out, the story of Michael Vick came to mind. And of course, the *Free Trader Beowolf* is an homage to a favorite game of times past.

Myths of the Organians grew out of trying to understand in my own mind how the Organians could work. This is the problem of *Star Trek* and its lack of continuity. We met the Organians in one episode and never heard from them again. There is even one published *Star Trek* novel in which the Organians ban the Klingons from space travel for 1,000 years!

Games of the *Throne:* This came in from Gary Carney, who is the most endearingly annoying gamer I have ever met. He's full of ideas, interested in the most marginal parts of the *Star Fleet Universe*, and sends in an article about something every month. Many of them could not be used, but this one (with some editing) was not only publishable but actually interesting and, well, you just *want* to find something Gary sends in that you can publish because he's such a nice guy.

Class History: Players love these, and I hate writing them because they are actual *work* as you have to research every published story and scenario to make sure you did not contradict yourself. I have about five or six of them in progress at any given time and picked this one because players in the BBS topic said that the Lyrans have never had the honor of a class history.

I am working on one about Federation carriers for a future issue but it's the biggest one I have ever attempted, and I have no idea when I will have time to finish it.

Developmental History: The first of these, done a long time ago, proved popular and we try to do more of them. Many have written such articles but the tendency to rewrite history and create new fighters that make existing fighters obsolete makes it hard to accept input from outside. The article on the Federation F101 was unusually popular and sparked the publication of one about Kzinti and Klingon fighters. This issue, we saw the one for the Gorns and Romulans. Who knows, I might write the one about Tholians and Hydrans next time.

COMMUNICATIONS

The signature font for this section is Friz Quadrata.

News: Much of this page is standard and is repeated almost unchanged every issue because it is important information we need to keep in front of the customers and fans. I was surprised to see so many tournaments listed this time after what had been a visible shortage of events in previous issues. There were, in fact, so many of these that we had to move the ones for *Federation Commander* to another chapter. There should have been a report on the Origins *F&E* events and on the Origins miniatures events, but nobody sent one in and it didn't occur to me to go beat the bushes trying to get people to send them. I will hound people now (13 Nov) to see if they'll send in these reports for the 1 Dec publication date for *Captain's Log Supplemental*.

The article on outrageous people is one I have been "writing" for years. Whenever one of them showed up, or whenever I remembered one from days gone by, I stuck a note about him in a file. Eventually, I had about 30 of them and picked the top ten, but with a little extra space I added a few who tied for #10. I hope it doesn't come off sounding like I'm a cranky old man. I actually wrote it because in hindsight all of these incidents can now be regarded as funny. Sometimes an outrageous person is just misinformed. One of the guys on the list honestly thought I made a million dollars a year and couldn't understand why I would not spend a few hundred making his request happen. Sometimes an outrageous person is just a jerk, and sometimes it's someone who can only feel good about himself if he is destroying someone else (or trying to).

The article on restarting an *SFB* group grew out of several unrelated conversations on the BBS, Forum, and Email. It gave me an opportunity to provide some insight into how your Favorite Local Game Store works, and how its manager thinks.

After Action: These articles more or less write themselves on the BBS. Petrick usually does the hard part of the work on these. (He did this time; I did it last time when he was busy with X1R.) The files he gives me are several times as long and list every typo and missing comma. I boil them down to just the "game critical" items. This time, we're using the *Supplemental* file to publish the full file, and you can see just exactly how diligent he is about listing his own mistakes.

Command the Future: This is my article to write and it is the strategic vision for the company. It tears my heart out to keep repeating "We are going to do XYZ and it will be great!" because I don't have the time to do every project I can think of, and because outside designers are pretty hit-and-miss about actually delivering promised products.

The one in this issue spends more time on *Prime Directive* than anything else. As a publisher, I'm excited about this because for the first time I have an RPG line editor who is competent to do the job and who is *not me*. (I have been the line editor from the start and it's obvious that I'm no good at editing RPGs.) What is important to understand is that RPGs are not going to be done *instead* of the boardgames, but *in addition* to them, since now (for the first time) the head boardgame designer doesn't have to stop designing boardgames to edit RPGs that are written in Swahili, Sanskrit, and Lower Urdu.

Input Guide: This page came together while doing *Captain's Log #37* as I edited articles and kept finding the same problems that I had to take time to fix. If I can get the *F&E* guys to stop using sentences like "I stratted my reserve and directed on his mauler," it will give me time to do one extra product per year.

Starline 2400: This is, in some ways, the easiest and most important page. We just have to list the new miniatures we have done or are doing and show photos of them. I am glad to have Eric Olivarez as our Graphics Director, as nobody else can manage to take photographs that actually will print decently on the Kyoceras.

This issue was an especially heartwarming moment for me,

as we brought our deal with Iron Crown to fruition. When we did *Module Y2*, players asked about early ISC minis. I just didn't have the time or money to spend making 28 new ships for a secondary market. Between the costs of sculpting and molds, we would have made no money on them, but it would have taken up a lot of management time. The idea I hit upon was to find somebody who already made a line of starships and use those for our early ISC ships. I asked on the Game Publisher's Association mailing list for recommendations and was sent to Bruce Neidlinger of Iron Crown, who proved to be a super-nice guy to talk to. (Of course, he may have an inflated idea of how many of his ships that my customers will buy, but it costs him nothing to create a special web page for them.) We picked out some nice ships, did countersheet images to match, and here you are. Bruce even arranged for one of his fans to paint up a pair of cruisers and send us the photos.

Why?: This page is kind of easy to do since I only have to go download the "Why?" questions from the BBS topic and answer them. I do this a few times a year and whenever we do a *Captain's Log* I just slice off as many as I need.

Star Fleet Awards: Some people think that handing out imaginary medals and campaign ribbons is just silly, but Steve Petrick and I take it quite seriously. We go to a lot of effort to make sure that everyone who worked on projects gets his hard work acknowledged and rewarded.

This issue saw several interesting events. We elaborated on the Origins campaign ribbon. (Everybody who attends earns one, but to get a meritorious emblem, or a command clasp, or a combat clasp, you actually have to work for ADB during the show). Jean got her second Champion of Life medal and Leanna pointed out that her own Silver Star should also be changed to a Champion of Life medal. We added the GIA awards due to the rising level of Internet piracy. Jean got key awards for delivering the very difficult *PD20M* product.

Scatter-Pack: We didn't have one of these in this issue, as we just didn't have a lot of leftover notes looking for a spot to land in. The only thing was the Alliance flooring deal and we gave that its own headline.

FEDERATION COMMANDER

The signature font for this chapter is Ethnocentric, the font used as branding on all of the *FC* product covers.

Communique: This page is fairly obvious and easy. We just remind you what we have done, and tell you what we plan to do. We're proud of our accomplishments and excited about our plans for the future.

The page also includes a selection of "Questions from a new player" which *you* can use to educate new players entering your group. Just knowing the kind of questions on their minds makes it easier to recruit them.

Tactics: I can always count on Patrick J. Doyle to write a brilliant tactics article for *Captain's Log* and this time was no exception. It was a true joy to read. We actually used two of his articles in this issue, because they were so good.

Tournament: Mike West crafted a set of tournament rules for Origins 2008, and Mike Filsinger executed them, and had to adjust them when things didn't work as planned. (A player wanted to quit when he started losing, something that the scoring system could not deal with.) Mike and Mike worked hard over the following months to craft a set of rules that should be airtight.

Project Z: This is Mike West's project to give *FC* players a broader range of ships by showing them how to convert *SFB* ships. What nobody says out loud is that you can use his Z-rules to convert the zillions of *SFB* SSDs you can find all over the Internet, many of which are from genres we are not licensed to use in *Federation Commander*.

Command Notes: We really need people to write more of these for us to publish. We have so few that writing a decent

Command Note for *FC* might actually be the easiest submission to write and very nearly the most likely to be published.

Email & On-Line: I am blessed to have Frank Brooks running our Play-by-Email system and Paul Franz running our On-Line gaming system. They do a super job. Each took over for earlier heads of their divisions and has taken the divisions to new places to better serve our customers.

Scenarios: I have a bunch of *Federation Commanders* scenarios on file, but it always seems that it takes me hours to find two or three I can publish. Please write more! *Federation Commander* is so much "cleaner" than *SFB* that I can print three *FC* scenarios in the space it takes for one *SFB* scenario. I always try to have a good mix of writers, empires, and formats, such as the challenging three-player scenario in this issue.

Borders of Madness: The theory here is that some day we will actually print a product called *Borders of Madness* which will have streamlined *FC* versions of all of the *SFB* rules we left out. The object is to allow players to use the faster *FC* system to play out more complicated battles.

SFB SCENARIOS

The signature font for this chapter is Eurostyle Extended, which is also used for SFB Tactics and for Shipyard.

Steven P. Petrick is in charge of these, and he has a huge file of them ready to publish at any given time. Most of them are written by one writer! He's good, but we'd love to see scenarios by many more authors. If you want to get published in the *Star Fleet Universe* you have a better chance with a scenario than with a ship, a rule, a new empire, or a story!

We call the scenario chapter the "Salami Section" since I can use as many slices as I need to fill the space. If somebody doesn't do a promised article, we add his pages to the scenario chapter and go get another slice or two of salami. If somebody's article is a page too long, we take that page out of scenarios and put a slice or two of salami back in the refrigerator.

When selecting scenarios from that huge file Steve Petrick has, I work from several criteria:

1. Lots of different authors.
2. As many different empires as possible.
3. At least something for our "fringe" areas such as the Omega Octant and the Magellanics.

When I get to the end of the available pages, the last scenario picked (not necessarily the last one in consecutive order) is the one that fits in the remaining space.

SFB DATABASE

The signature font for this chapter is Eras Bold.

Background Questions: This came out of a series of questions on the BBS, and seemed important enough to be published.

Monsters: Steve Petrick does a monster per issue, adding all of the rules to take that monster places the original scenario never envisioned. This issue, it was the turn of Arastoz. Next issue will be the Energy Monster.

New Rules: Not that *SFB* actually *needs* new rules, but we try to publish one that players actually want now and then. This time, we printed an old rule which was published a decade ago but is hard to find since it's in *Module S2* and in the original *Prime Directive* rulebook.

Ask Admiral Growler: The way this gets done is dynamic. There is no "Growler for *CL#39* file"; there is simply "Growler we haven't published yet". People ask *SFB* questions in the BBS topics, Mike Filsinger answers them, Steve Petrick then sorts them into categories, Jean Sexton edits them, and I (Steve Cole) make the final selections. Growler is normally four pages. This time we did six (to have spares) and used four and a half (to balance with the *Anarchist* article). Since we have a huge backlog, we printed some of it in *CL#38: Supplemental*.

Brothers of the Anarchist: The first one of these was done twenty-plus years ago but never published because TFG-#2 mistakenly thought it was *Brothers of the Anti-Christ*. I gave it to Steve Petrick to keep him busy, and he completed it as a major article. This issue, we published Chapter 18 and have at least six more to go.

Romulan Early Bases: When Steve Petrick decided to go ahead and publish these (after the staff had objected) he wrote an article explaining that their prophesies of doom were unfounded. He sent me a copy of the internal memo, and I turned it into this article because I thought it was worthwhile writing.

Update for X-Ships: Steve Petrick does an article of this type every issue, updating something that needs updating. This time, given the recent publication of *SFB Module X1R*, he decided to update the X-ships in all the campaigns. I'm *sooo* glad I did not have to write that!

Example of Labs in Combat: People are always asking us to do example articles, and this subject/idea was proposed three issues ago. When Steve Petrick ran out of anything else to do, he agreed to write this, and it turned out to be a very interesting article which I enjoyed reading.

SFB TACTICS

The signature font for this chapter is Eurostyle Extended. We used to use one called Future but it doesn't print very well because it's the wrong "kind" of font.

Battlegroup: I moved the battlegroup article to Tactics this issue for two reasons. One, we were kind of short on tactics articles, and two, the series has evolved from an exercise in accounting to a tactical discourse. Read the articles and you'll find players who never saw each other's writing who all came to the same conclusion: When you don't know where you are going to go or what you are going to fight, bring a scout! Notice how the #1 thing all of them say is to pump up electronic warfare so the Juggernaut doesn't blow your ships away before you can put your plan in motion.

To be honest, I used to hate *Battlegroup*, but that was back when it was nothing but accounting, so many points for drones, T-bombs, Marines, refits, and so forth. As it has evolved, it has become one of my personal favorites. Indeed, much of the impetus for creating a *Supplemental* file was to use the leftover battlegroup articles.

Primer: There is no law that says only Scott Moellmer gets to write these, but he does write them, and I'm grateful to start the work on every issue by asking "What is Moellmer doing this time?" If anybody else wants to write one, go ahead, as nothing says we cannot print two of them.

Term Papers: At the end of the Interregnum, we had 50 pages of Term Papers approved and on file and slowly used them in several issues. When we ran out of those, we had no end of new ones posted on the BBS. Then one particular player (who knows a good deal less about tactics and the game than he thinks he does) started flooding the topic with so many dubious papers that many authors quit writing papers at all. We have banned him from the topic and wish people who used to write papers would start writing them again.

Victory at Origins: This article never arrived for reasons which we do not understand. In future, it will be the policy that if the Origins winner does not have his article to us in time for publication in the November *Captain's Log*, he (or she) will be suspended from all tournaments until the article is submitted and approved.

Victory at Five Nations: This article arrived too late to be used and will be considered for *Captain's Log #39*.

Fighting the Magellanics: When we begged for tactics articles, Ken Burnside sent this one in. We didn't use it because the tactical graders said it was too similar to his previous article on the same subject. We put it into the *Supplemental* file.

STAR FLEET VENUES

The signature font for this chapter is Serpentine Bold.

Star Fleet Command: We continue to support the computer game that refuses to die.

Star Fleet Warlord: One of the oldest of *SFU* campaign games, *Star Fleet Warlord* was begun by Bruce Graw and is now carried on by Paul Franz. The system continues to grow and improve and I'm happy to have him running it for us.

Reviews: We don't specifically recruit or solicit review of new Star Trek products, but when one comes in that is as well written as the one by Jonathan Snyder, we publish it.

Galactic Conquest: Probably the oldest and longest-running *SFU* campaign game, *Galactic Conquest* is the creation of John Berg, who continues to run it. This issue saw John and his fellow GM Mike Incavo bring the first two universes to a close and launch Universe #4.

Prime Directive: We avoid actually publishing RPG stuff in *Captain's Log* since the RPG players refuse to buy an entire magazine just to get two pages about RPGs. Instead, we promote the *Prime Directive* product line by publishing interesting background articles, such as this Planetary Survey by John Sickels. Ok, so we "borrowed" the article from John's forthcoming book *Prime Directive Federation*.

PBEM and On-Line: What Frank Brooks and Paul Franz do for *Federation Commander*, they have long done for *Star Fleet Battles*, and they continue to do it with style and grace. Frank Brooks's reports on his games often end up being hidden extra tactics articles of great interest.

Star Fleet Battle Force: We continue to publish playtest material from future expansions. I had a request on file to publish the *Anarchist* and *Exile* (two captured-and-converted ships) but didn't want to since they are just more ships with nothing unique about them. Steve Petrick suggested that I do commando ships instead, which I did. Steve Petrick added the rules about shield reinforcement cards and Prime Team cards during proofreading.

FEDERATION & EMPIRE

The signature font for this chapter is Palatino.

The Front Page: I enjoyed poking a little fun at Chuck Strong, who has taken a firm hand on *F&E*. The base upgrade cost data was important and needed to be published. The Minefield rule is my reaction to the horrifying Telenko article.

Q&A: Mike Curtis answers questions on the BBS and sends me packages of answered questions and questions requiring rulings. I process a few every week and the result is three pages of *Captain's Log*. Because *F&E* players cannot seem to use actual English, Jean added a list of abbreviations.

ComPot Shock: This article terrified me.

Tactical Notes: Prolific *F&E* players never stop writing them. The Joe Stevenson article had been rejected twice because it restates David Crump's article of 20 years ago, but I finally agree that it was worth publishing as it is the key to game play.

Altered Alliances: The prolific Gary Carney wrote this interesting scenario. Chuck Strong made it playable.

New Ships: Ok, we all know that the only one of these that *F&E* players actually *want* is that Federation carrier, right?

SHIPYARD

The signature font for this chapter is Eurostyle Extended.

Early Years: Several pages of this chapter were used for Early Years material in honor of *Module Y2*. This included sublight skiffs (designed for utility space work, we are fighting a tough battle with players who want to use them as PFs), Paravian bases, and the Romulan early sublight bombers and their bases.

New *SFB* Ships: I went to the BBS and looked for new ships ideas. I started in the Federation section after some players complained that the Federation had not been "feeling the love" in recent issues.

The first thing I found was Loren Knight's "Armed Recovery Transport" which he seemed to think would be used in mid-battle to rescue crippled fighters. Not a chance (one good shot from a war cruiser and this thing is toast), but it had some uses in "dangerous areas but not in real combat". As I worked on it, the idea came to me that these ships had been around before the war as part of the local governments' "services" to the taxpayers to rescue stranded freighters and the like. Pressed into wartime service, they would have evolved into the ART which Loren envisioned (although nobody would send an ART into combat so perhaps there is no ... *ART of Battle?*). Wait a minute! Doesn't *The ART of Battle* sound like a scenario title begging to be written by somebody?

Many players had asked for a Federation answer to the Klingon C10V (a heavy carrier built on a heavy dreadnought hull). I looked over several submissions and ended up with this one by Mike West which isn't actually built on a DNH, but that gives us something to pick for next time.

The Hydran Templar came out of work on the *Master Starship Book*. Tos Crawford asked for it, and I told Steve Petrick to do it without telling him it was an idea from the same guy who invented the "Crawford Box" since Steve Petrick tends to see red and have fire coming out of his nostrils when he hears that name.

New Federation Commander ships: The plan had been to do just eight Fleet Scale version of LTTs, but players wanted both versions, we could only use four pages, and we had already scheduled them to be in *Booster Pack #94* next year. So we did four. The Federation and Klingons were an obvious choice. I picked the Kzintis and Lyrans because they fight each other a lot. I drove the staff crazy when I did the first draft as I accidentally copied the wrong movement cost off of an *SFBSSD*.

Again, reviewing Federation ship proposals I found an OCA design that didn't work (and created one that did). Steve Petrick noted that the ship was too good for Y125 and we changed some of the weapons to a Y168 refit. I also found multiple proposals for the BCP and did a composite one.

FINAL THOUGHTS ON CL#38

Usually, when Steve Petrick and I finish an issue of *Captain's Log*, we have a moment when we scream "Let's not do another issue like this!" Not this time. We actually had a plan and followed the plan and the issue (a very good issue) got done without a lot of Storm and Drama, no "working to midnight, three nights in row", and not really any "We forgot to do that article and now we don't have time to do it" episodes.

Captain's Log #38 is, very much, the culmination of a supreme effort that Steve Petrick and I have made to get the production of *Captain's Log* on something other than crisis management. It's not just *Captain's Log*; all of our products this year have been done by "a plan" based on how many pages had to get done every day, week, and month. We operated on the theory that "every day, we do the required pages first" and only then moved on to lower-priority things such as spending hours answering a single rules question. It's just a matter of setting priorities, and always has been, but it's too easy to allow "work on products" to become the "bank account of time" that can be drawn on for no end of lesser projects.

We always finish a *Captain's Log* so excited about the contents and the process that we want to start working on the next issue right away, and this issue was no different. We actually *have* started on *Captain's Log #39* but this is in the context of an overall plan to also complete many other products.

NOTES FROM OTHERS

Many other creative people were involved in this and other projects, and they were invited to write a few lines, or paragraphs, or pages about their thoughts, experiences, and visions.

STEVEN P. PETRICK

*Company Senior Vice President, head of SFB Division.
His signature font is Verdana, bold and erect.*

Preparation for every issue of *Captain's Log* begins before the previous issue is finished. As we move through each issue, ideas and sometimes complete articles are gathered for the issue after the issue we are working on.

This issue, we started with a major leftover from *CL#37*, that being the *Battlegroup* article. Thanks to Scott Tenhoff, the *SFB* scenario drawer is always full. I also had the major section on Romulan early bases and early bombers, which had been around since the *Module J2* project. As always, there were Tactical Notes, Term Papers, and Command Notes in the file to be graded. I can always count on Mike West (and Steve Cole) to do the section for *Federation Commander*, on Mike Filsinger to provide page after page of *Ask Admiral Growler*, and on Chuck Strong and Mike Curtis to do the *F&E* section without a lot of proding. We always have articles from Frank Brooks (PBEM), Paul Franz (*Warlord*, *SFBOL*, and *FCOL*), and John Sickels (*Prime Directive*) to fill those pages.

The name on the door says I am the editor and Steve Cole is the publisher, but it's much more of an integrated team than that. In a very real sense, we both do about half of both jobs. Steve Cole writes and recruits writers for many of the pages, while I write others (and recruit people to write still more). The Update article, Monster article, and Example article are my province, and I take special joy in selecting and writing them.

JEAN SEXTON

Vice President of Proofreading and Product Professionalization, Prime Directive Editor-in-Chief.

Her signature font is Apple Chancery, proper for a lady.

I looked back over my notes from last year and was struck immediately with the difference that a year has made in the production of *Captain's Log*.

Proofreading is like cleaning in some ways. When you have made a first pass at cleaning up the clutter, suddenly you notice the dust the clutter hid. I got the "Tactical Notes", "Term Papers", "Battlegroup", and "Command Notes" as text and was able to change the worst of the jargon, capitalization, and odd grammatical errors before those articles were laid out. That made a huge difference in how much time would be required to fix the later PDFs of those same articles.

We got faster with making proofreading changes. Steve sent me PDFs of the articles. I got them, printed them out, and made my purple notes all over them (sometimes resulting in what a horrified Steve referred to as "an ocean of purple"). As I finished a page, I scanned it and sent it off to Steve. He could then easily see where the change should be made and make the corrections, instead of reading the tedious "Column 1. Paragraph 12. Line 8. 'its' should be 'it's'" which left Steve doing lots of counting and screaming.

As for the writers . . .

Steve Cole had what I first thought was a terminal case of Creeping Capitalization Syndrome. In this year, he has made a remarkable comeback, even to the point that I sometimes have to add capital letters! I find his writing to be entertaining and informative.

Steven Petrick's writing has a very different tone to it. Studious and rich, I imagine it sounds much like a classroom lecture

given at the Star Fleet Academy. He has made great strides in avoiding the use of "race" when he means "species" or "empire".

One of the fun stories to read (and difficult to proofread because it made me laugh right out loud) was Mike Grafton's "Doomward and the Vortex". Some of the images just tickled my funny bone. But then, I think that most of the time, the "history" part of *Captain's Log* is the easiest part for me to proofread.

On the other hand . . . there are the papers on tactics and strategies. These did at least inspire the next issue's "Input Guide".

Finally, I am excited by one thing. When I was proofreading a Ship Card for *FC*, I noticed a "real" mistake and got a "Good catch!" from *SVC*. Maybe spending time with all of you has me absorbing the *SFU* by osmosis. It certainly made me happy!

It has been a wonderful year for me and one that I have enjoyed on many levels. I hope that you haven't really noticed any changes for that would mean that my job is being done correctly.

CHUCK STONG

Head of the Federation & Empire Division.

His signature font is Palatino, same as the F&E chapter.

Captain's Log is an ideal medium for keeping *F&E* fresh and moving forward. We always look forward communicating to the players, formally resolving issues and questions along with presenting interesting features, TacNotes and scenarios.

With the growth of *F&E*, players always seem to find better ways and ideas to play the game and we are only too happy to present their best thoughts in TacNotes. These papers are graded by staffers for ingenuity, usefulness, and accuracy (especially rule interpretation errors), but only the finest go forward. I encourage players to continue sending their best ideas forward but try to keep them pithy as they are more likely to be presented.

With *F&E* being such an ever growing game series, rule questions and conflicts are going to be encountered. Mike Curtis does an outstanding job researching answers that I find this to be a pleasure to review his work. On the rare occasion when Mike cannot resolve an issue we staff it and present our best ideas to Steve for a ruling.

A cornerstone of the *SFU* game universe is continuity and every *Captain's Log* includes an *F&E* Ship Information Table on new units presented in the *Log* at could have an impact on *F&E*. The *F&E* Staff reviews the new units from *SFB* and *FC* and evaluates their capabilities for inclusion on the SIT. Occasionally we validate a requirement for new unit in *F&E* which may drive the publication of a new unit in the *SFB* or *FC* game series.

Finally, one of the things I really enjoy is overseeing scenario development and publication. *ADB* has made it a staple of *Captain's Log* to include an *F&E* scenario whenever possible. Steve sends me a number of scenarios he has on file for review. I then evaluate them for publication and select one that I find interesting and well organized. I then research and validate the setting, schedules, forces, economics and production used in the scenario to present something appealing and enjoyable for the players involved. The scenario is then sent to the staff for final review and publication in *Captain's Log*.

One final note: I continue to encourage players post their scenario proposals as they spark interest and encourage game play which is vital to *F&E's* continued growth and development.

MIKE WEST

Head of the Federation Commander Division.

Principle Staff Officer, The Early Years.

His signature font is Clarendon, a "wild west" font.

For a while now, I have had the privilege of being able to contribute to *Captain's Log*, and *CL#38* was no different. For *CL#38*, my contributions both as a direct contributor and a re-

viewer. As a direct contributor, I wrote the second part of "Project Z" for *Federation Commander*. This article focused on how to turn an *SFB* SSD into a Fleet Scale Ship Card for *Federation Commander*. I have been a "ship card checker" since the first *FC* product, and so this article really allowed me to take all of the lessons I have learned over time and put them into one spot.

I was also able to contribute a ship for *SFB*. Like many others, I had always wanted to see a Federation CVA-type ship based on a DNG. (i.e. a CVA with six photons instead of just four). I had tried multiple times, but never came up with anything satisfying. Recently, I finally stumbled on a design that I was happy with and submitted it. Fortunately, I was not the only one happy with it.

As a reviewer, I check portions of *Captain's Log* that. Since the introduction of *Federation Commander*, that includes most of its components, but I also help out with the *SFB* side. In *CL#38*, these included the SSDs for *SFB* and the ship cards for *FC*, the *Borders of Madness* article, and both the *FC* tactical notes and the *SFB* term papers.

No matter how many *Captain's Logs* I have worked on, it is always a little thrill to see my name in print, and good ideas of mine put to use. I am always thankful to SVC and SPP for the opportunity to do so. It is also good to see how many others are involved and contribute. The *Star Fleet Universe* has many good people involved, with whom I am glad to work.

2008 Origins Report

by Steven P. Petrick, VP of Operations

The loadout was completed as scheduled and departure was within the programmed time element.

The bypass around Oklahoma City worked out well, at least from the standpoint that it was less stressful as we avoided the heavy traffic, it is a lot easier to drive when you are not trying to plan ahead to be in the appropriate exit lane several times.

Set up for Origins proceeded apace, although we had to make several adjustments to changing conditions. This was not a large problem as we are always willing to cooperate with Origins officials as much as possible to make the event run smoothly and not be a fly in their ointment.

Federation and Empire was already up and running, as was to be expected with Origins' new hours. Having those two rooms up on the second floor gives us a controlled and permanent "base camp" from which to conduct operations. We held the singalong there, including a birthday cake for Jean Sexton. She was a big hit with everyone with her good nature and camaraderie.

Our challenge seems to be getting the word out about how the tournaments are run. We are still having people arrive at the last moment to enter Tournaments when they have no chance of winning the main event because they have started too late.

As ever, the Origins Judging Staff was capable and generous with their time and effort to make sure everything ran smoothly. Mike Filsinger has become my strong second-in-command and handled *Federation Commander* so I could focus on *Star Fleet Battles*. I know how good a job Chuck Strong did because I never heard from him or his players. My judging staff included Roger Rardain, Mike Novean, Nick Blank (when the *F&E* guys didn't kidnap him), and the always-cheerful Paul Franz. It is always good to work with experienced and combat-proven individuals. They all took turns running shifts to do demonstration games down in the demo area for both *Federation Commander* and *Star Fleet Battle Force*.

There were two "off-site" events for miniatures operated in the main gaming hall by Jeremy Gray and John Schneder. Both seem to have been enjoyed by the participants, and we can hope that there will be opportunity for those events to repeat.

All too soon Origins came to a close, and with practiced ease, even with the lack of carts caused by a dispute between Origins officials and the service company, SVC and I folded our displays

and slipped into the evening traffic headed home.

As always (over the last few years) we asked ourselves if we would cross the Mississippi River the first night, or stop short. As before, we pushed on, bedding down in St. Clair, Missouri. We never really seem to make any time on the drive home despite the extra driving the night before, i.e., we always get back to Amarillo about the same time on Monday evening. But both of us enjoy the drive as going to and from Origins is about all the vacation we get in a given year.

2008 Origins F&E Report

by Chuck Strong, Head of the Federation & Empire Division.

Origins 2008 was another growth year for *F&E* scenarios. We packed the entire room with four games played on large scale maps with 30 participants a new record for us at Origins. The ever-popular, empire-building scenario, EARLY BEGINNINGS, was back yet again with a full set of 7 players. Another player favorite, the FOUR POWERS WAR, was able to complete one game and begin another due to a full slate of players. We all were shocked to learn that the former FEAR, Nick Black, really does play *F&E* as he was sighted playing the a sector scenario from MAELSTROM. And what Origins would not be complete without some sort of large-scale scenario? Joe Stevenson and others developed and playtested a new alternative timeline scenario, ERRANT WIND, where a full-scale General War explodes a few years later after a massive fleet modernization effort by all empires and with a Lyran controlled "LDR Protectorate" siding with the Coalition. Expect see this scenario in an up-coming *Captain's Log*.

A big bonus for us this year was the change to the Origins schedule that now allows us to set up on Tuesday night and immediately begin play the next morning, giving us over four full days of *F&E*. This allowed us to also have more late-night social time where many of the groups get together to swap *F&E* stories and ideas. Many of these ideas find their way into the *F&E* seminar hosted by the game designer Stephen V. Cole and some are even now in the game. We look forward to exploiting this expanded schedule in 2009 so make note of this for planning purposes and start preparations to attend Origins now!

2008 Origins Booth

by Stephen V. Cole, head of the exhibit hall booth

When we first started going to Origins as an independent company in 1999, we tossed a coin, and I got the booth. I will always wonder if Steve Petrick had a two-headed coin.

We have used the same displays and booth set up for several years, which are a decided improvement over the previous "garage sale" format. I always recruit a couple of helpers, and was delighted this year to have returning Booth Babe Colleen Knipfer (famous for "You want it. It's in the budget. Buy it.") and first-time Booth Babe Jean Sexton (who made offers nobody dared to refuse). I didn't really have to do much work. They ran the booth and pushed us to a strong sales total (higher than last year), while I sat there to greet old friends, make deals with other companies, interview the artists and writers who come around looking for work, speak with the many people running small local conventions who want support, and fetch the ladies coffee and soda as required. (I need to also mention Scott Moellmer, who made sure that my dinner was waiting, still hot, when the booth closed down each night.) What I enjoy most about the dealer hall is being treated as an "elder statesman" by new game companies who come to ask for advice and encouragement, and by established companies who pay their respects.

Origins is like Brigadoon, a small town that exists for only five days a year, separate from the mundane reality of the "real" world. I enjoyed seeing so many of you there.

STAR FLEET HISTORY

DOOMWARD: THE OTHER SIDE OF THE VORTEX

When we told Michael Grafton of our plans to publish *Doomward and the Vortex*, he sent in this “what was going on in the other ship” story. We didn’t want to publish it because we didn’t want to have to develop and publish rules, SSDs, and histories for the empire the ship came from, and for the empires in its home galaxy which it fought.

We still don’t want to and don’t plan to.

However, when the discussion of *Captain’s Log: Supplemental* started, someone noted that one of the obvious things we could publish in it was Michael Grafton’s “other side” story.

For better or worse, I haven’t even tried to edit this story, so what you have is literally what Michael wrote, without attempts by myself to make it meet any standard, fit into the universe, or even to correct spelling. What you see is what you get. As I edited the *Vortex* story, it diverged from this “other side” story slightly, so there could be a place or two something doesn’t “match”, so I ask your charity in reading it. We wanted you to see the story (so did Michael Grafton) but we didn’t want to spend a lot of manpower making it into a “legally binding” *SFU* story.

It’s a fun romp through another vision of reality. Just nobody ever pull out this story during a rules argument and use it to make their case to Mike Filsinger or Steve Petrick. You will lose. —*SVC*

FLIGHT FROM DESTINY

by Michael C. Grafton

Bridge, CIS Destiny Denied In the inversion vortex cloud, M2344-1 cluster.

Captain Xeri stood at his command console easily balancing atop his roller. His crew around him was concentrating on their varied tasks. The Couris pack were clambering atop their “jungle gym” at the helm and navigation stations, their soft chattering, scampering movements and waving bushy tails at odds with the precision of their inputs to the ship. Gyra, his executive officer, stood at her weapons station reading the science data coming in from the labs, giant bat wings folded back while Bero and Gura, Triii like him, were balanced on their rollers at the science and scan stations on either side of her. Duqqi, was standing with all six legs braced, his telekinesis pushing the controls on the touch panel for the communication station. Races of the Commune united to push back the frontiers of knowledge.

Pqu, the ships junior most unifying empath, was on the bridge for no particular reason. Since it effectively was a slowly mobile pile of orange gravel, had no manipulating appendages or sense organs (other than those of the crew that had previously bonded with it), and could exist in almost any environment below 3200K (except the reactors while they were running), it had no real reason to be anywhere else either.

His ship, the *Destiny Denied*, was a new light survey class vessel. He had won her due to his actions in contacting a space dragon a few years back while commanding a destroyer, but this new ship was long on information gathering and short on weapons. But the sheer magnificence of the vortex now pulsating 8

MyKm away had drawn all of them to the bridge despite their usual schedules that rotated the senior crew to allow them to command and mentor their juniors.

“Captain, the vortex is starting to build to a field inversion event. Recommend we come about and get at least 20 MyKm out from the centrum.” Bero was perhaps the most unflappable science officer he had ever had the privilege to meet.

“Do it, maximum acceleration.” The ship artificial gravity field compensated for most of the effects, but most crew grabbed the stabilizer bars at their station. All collective ships used by the “Type 2” air breathing races used standing work stations after numerous tests failed to find a better solution to the problem of 12 different races all trying to use a one kind of chair.

The type one races had another solution for their methane breathing crews, while the type three crews floated in water. The Maxto (the first starfaring race in the Collective, their designs were the basis all other ships were modeled on) had their own ships designed to meet their unique cryogenic needs. Type threes had several unique ships completely filled with water for their crews, but they were few and far between. Four series of ships, one for each of the environments the sentients within the Commune required, made shipbuilding harder, but let all the members contribute. For 240 years the Collective had busily policed their small cluster of 1300 habitable star systems and managed intruding monsters, various alien ships transported here by various mechanisms, and the recent invaders with their power absorbing panels. That last lot had required a lot of effort to eradicate. They just wouldn’t communicate and they didn’t seem to care that the systems they wanted to use had occupants already. Luckily the Quark guns now on all main line combat ships tended to gut them in short order despite the other disadvantages of the weapon.

“Captain, the zone is inverting now. We didn’t get clear and have been transported, but we estimate that the entire zone will re-invert out to a 22 MyKm radius in a few minutes. Recommend we close with the vortex. We are passing 24 MyKm out now. Engines stabilizing.”

“Captain, we have a pair of contacts on the other side of the vortex; one is our sized and the other smaller. The larger one has extremely thick shields, estimated at 150% of ours, the smaller is turning away and accelerating. Their shields and engines are phased differently than ours with a synchronized resonance, so they weren’t transported. That won’t work often in this vortex; they just got lucky this time.”

“Understood. Come about and make sure we are within the next inversion horizon. Launch a probe drone under command control to scan the vortex when the launcher bears. Make sure it doesn’t approach the new ship too closely and fire a delta maser salvo across their bow so they understand that we don’t want hostilities and want to maintain a safe separation between us.”

“We are coming about and they have brought up their engine power. We are getting a good read on their output. About equal to ours. Do you want to go to full power on scans?”

“No, that might look like a targeting lock on. But bring the crew to status 2. We have to establish contact before we can lower our guard. Communications, start beaming over our standard message. And have the sociology team get into environment suits for boarding them once we have established some communication and are ready for a face to face.”

"Captain, they are launching some kind of high speed module into the vortex. It may be a scanning pod or something similar. It doesn't have a control channel or appear to have any sustaining propulsion. They also have launched a shuttle heading towards the vortex that is beaming out a simplex data stream to the other ship."

"Very well, continue to close with the vortex and pass them at 9 MyKm minimum separation. And keep your distance from their shuttle."

"Captain, they are firing warp accelerated photon atomic lasers between us and the vortex, like they don't want us approaching."

"Curious. If they are hostile they would have fired on us. And if they are not, they should want to stay outside the collecting field horizon. Science team, I want to see how much information gathering capability they have. They might not know what is happening."

"Captain," said Gyra, "perhaps they think we are invaders. So they want to pin us and prevent us calling for reinforcements."

"Well, Gyra, that would make sense, but that cloud is about to transport ALL of us to OUR home cluster in a few chrons. But if they don't know that, you may be right."

"Captain, the drone is ready to start passing the alien, but they are moving to intercept it at 3MyKm. They are not preparing to make a closer pass, the helm data is clear, but they have a powerful energy field being generated at that radius. I am unsure if the probe missile will survive."

Then, they watched the unknown ship ram the harmless probe drone with some kind of spherical energy field. Gyra hissed at the breach of polite behavior.

For a few more minutes the Destiny denied danced around the vortex, but due to the other ship being on the inside of any arc they tried to plot to the centrum, they never could get close without coming to close range. And Xeri didn't want to close with a potentially hostile intruder while all he had to bring to the party was a light load out of combat drones (most of the drones aboard were probe and sensor drones) and with their combat Deely Boppers unusable due to the cloud effects. Then the entire inner cloud inverted. Once you understood fully the process, the physics made the events easy to predict and observe with a properly calibrated sensor.

"Ok, this is quite enough. Come about and exit the cloud. We will rendezvous with Fearless Adventure and Intrepid Wanderer and return to show we aren't going to be pushed around. Obviously they don't respect ships that are just their equal in size. They must have fearsome capabilities to be so sure of themselves."

"Crew, when we get the other ships, we will have them herd this guy away from the vortex with a mass of remote controlled drones too large to be destroyed by that energy field. Then we can then go to full scanning power with all our systems on defense. The frigates can supply the offensive menace to keep this guy honest. If this intruder closes with our ships, we will salvo some drones into them until their shields are down and then we can send over some crew to board them. I'm sure that once we have some crew holding part of their ship they will be more amenable to discussion."

"Captain," said Gyra, "should I prepare a rules of engagement message for the frigates now?"

"Yes, do so now and send it as soon as we exit."

"Unknown is following us at a distance and accelerating to match our speed" chattered the Couris pack.

For several minutes, the unknown ship shadowed Destiny Denied; slightly off the track the Cruiser had taken. Science could not think of a reason for the intruder to NOT follow directly in their trail to get maximum information on engine output signature. Even at this distance, it was clear that their engines were somewhat different and a good wake analysis would surely be valuable.

"Exiting the cloud, captain."

"Very well, come to port and we'll cruise around until we find the escorts. We ARE on the reciprocal of the designated patrol route, are we not?"

"Yes Captain. We are taking the course marked 1 on the plot."

"Captain," said Gyra "they are discharging some energy from the front of their center engine nacelle. It appears to be an atomic binding force suppression beam of some kind. It isn't aimed at us."

"Captain, there they are! Frigates 26 MyKm ahead."

"Communications, transmit the squadron orders."

"Communications Aye."

"Captain," chattered the Couris pack, "the unknown is turning back into the cloud."

"Drat! All ships launch missiles. Speeds and courses designed to get them herded away from the vortex as planned. All ships to pursue. And Helm, slow to let us follow their track, we need detailed engine emissions on the unknown."

After several minutes passed the unknown ship drew away. "Captain, they are generating another of the disintegration fields. This one is only 700 km in radius and is much more powerful."

"Captain, lab 2 here. The unknown is passing into a denser dust region, and appears to be weaving around their base course for unknown reasons. We may lose contact with them for a while. Contact lost, our drone has dropped out."

"Increase scanning power to maximum. Use the planar arrays at full power. We can follow their ion trail to wherever they think to be going."

Tense moments passed. The unknown couldn't lose them, the frigates were too close and they had the ion trail to follow. And in the end, they had to meet around the vortex itself.

"Captain, the unknown is back in scanning range. All drones have been destroyed; we are picking up their ion trails and spectral information on their destruction. The disintegration field appears to be very powerful according to data from the frigates."

"Establish a high bandwidth data link to the frigates and send over all our tactical intelligence. Also, we will guide their drones on final approach; increase our ECCM to get a clean lock on."

"Vortex dead ahead. It is at warp 2.15 on the course shown."

"Frigates, close with the unknown ship after firing your delta masers. We need to get a readout on their shield response to energy strikes. Fearless Adventurer to fire their Quark battery at 7 MyKm and then pass astern. They are to get a readout on the ship from all quarters. Intrepid Wanderer to close and take a Quark shot at close range on another shield. We need them vulnerable to our contact team beaming over."

"Unknown has minor shield damage from the delta masers, no shield penetration; it appears they reinforced the shield somehow."

"Confirm? They can reinforce their shields?"

"Confirmed Captain. Quark gun from Fearless is firing now. Fearless has damaged the bearing shield with little or no minor internal damage as planned. They are maneuvering as ordered. Unknown is changing course to intercept Intrepid and is generating another disintegration field."

"Helm, close slowly so we can scan the unknown closer. As soon as the labs report they are done with analyzing the unknowns' ion trail you have discretion to maneuver freely."

"Intrepid closing, firing main battery. The packet hit poorly, but the shield is down."

"Captain! Intrepid has suffered an explosion off their bow shield. It's at about 50%. WHAM! We have also activated some kind of warp pulse detonation close aboard off our number 2 shield. Shield is at 58%. Cloud is thickening again, we are losing the unknown."

"Continue to close with the unknown, but stay at least 2 MyKm off their ion trail. Labs should have enough data by now."

For a few moments the *Destiny Denied* stumbled through the clouds looking for the combatants. Without their high power scanners the frigates would be having a tough time against their powerful foe.

"There they are! Plot is now showing all of their positions. The unknown is getting a data stream from that shuttle that just exited the vortex, it appears to be the one they had launched earlier. Drones in flight as shown. All three ships are showing damage and are streaming atmosphere. Analysis shows that the unknown has an oxygen nitrogen mix similar to ours. Fearless is maneuvering behind a quark shadow cloud."

"Launch three heavy drones right now with energized warheads and warp acceleration. Weapons maintain positive control links, we want to take down all their shields, so we will have to control how they hit carefully."

"Communications to bridge, remote telemetry shows both of our frigates are damaged; we have updates on your intel and sensor plots. *Intrepid* is crippled and the unknown is closing in on Fearless. Unknown is maneuvering wildly as shown on the maneuvering plot."

"Fearless is firing. They didn't quite drop the bow shield. They are applying a tractor. Tractor is now locked. Drone is impacting the unknowns number 5 shield; it is now almost down." Xeri looked at the intelligence plot, the unknown had been using his shields brilliantly to protect his ship, sacrificing them to allow his weapons to kill his comrades; but now the unknown was running out of options as his shields were in tatters and his closing drones could strike any shield at will. Soon he could close and send over an unstoppable wave of boarders.

"Captain, the vortex is building up to another inversion. It is now in a discharge phase. We predict the vortex will be fading out in the next few chrons."

"Good, as soon as the vortex fades out we can start to maneuver and fight a battle on our terms. Right now we have to hold him here without hurting him too badly."

"Captain, second unknown ship exiting the vortex! It is very small and at high speed. It appears to be the small ship that fled when we first were inverted."

"Retarget all drones onto the new ship. All drones are to be guided to hit one shield, we have to isolate the unknown until the vortex dissipates!"

As Xeri and his crew watched in horror the new ship whirled about and closed on a high speed suicide run towards the Fearless, fired all weapons, and launched two shuttles just as the drones approached. "One drone tractored, good hits with the other two. Fearless is heavily damaged. Unknown number 2 is dropping its aft shields and is transporting to unknown 1. Unknown shuttle orbiting the vortex has self destructed."

Then, Fearless' tractor link faded out, even as the final drone slammed into the small unknown ship gutting it. "Captain, the Fearless reports an uncontrolled warp containment failure." On the display the brave ship burst in a flare that the filters could not entirely tame. "They are all dead."

On the plot, the first unknown ship leapt into the vortex just a moment before it winked out.

"Destiny Denied to all ships and crew. We will perform search and rescue operations and return to base. I appreciate your courage and wish we could have saved our comrades. Xeri, out." Then, with a heavy heart, Xeri started to grieve for his lost brothers and sisters.

From *Module Y2*

This fiction story was used to fill blank pages in *SFB Module Y2*. Because some of you might not have read this very good story, and it cost us nothing to add it here, we did!

Kingdom's Ebb

by Scott Moellmer

Cargo hold, Unlicensed Cargo Ship *PM856* Somewhere deep in Hydran space, Late Y86

"Did you know you can smell despair?"

Hocs stirred, shaken from her thoughts by the odd statement. Her brother Huce looked at her, through the heavy atmosphere that would have been dank and murky to most alien species, but was clear as day to the senses of her people. Few others in the crowded, filthy cargo area around them seemed to notice, or care about anything the two said.

"What are you talking about?"

"It's bitter, and kind of oily. Can't you smell it, Hocs?"

Hocs considered her brother, lately of His Majesty's Marines, now one of the many nameless refugees trying to stay alive, as the Klingon-Lyran invasion advanced deeper into Hydran space. Then her eyes passed over the huddled masses of people, eating what they had salvaged, suffering in the intense heat of 175 degrees below zero.

"I'll admit, hiding in an alien ship, paying these criminals to help us escape, and hoping the Klingons don't find and kill us, isn't the most hopeful of prospects. But if you just give in..." Her words trailed off, as it appeared Huce was not really listening to her any more, and had rolled over on a scrap of blanket, apparently trying to go back to sleep on the hot floor.

Hocs shook her head, both mouths sighing. How had it come to this? Little more than a decade before, they had been part of the glory days of the Hydran Navy, smashing the Klingon ships, and forcing a peace on them greatly to Hydra's favor. They'd even made the Guilds happy by selling vast amounts of war material to the Klingons, at inflated prices of course, to pad the Guild's coffers.

Hocs had heard that the Klingons had defeated their other foe, the Kzintis, and had built newer ships since the last war. But even as one of the Kingdom's most visionary engineers, she'd somehow failed to foresee those factors coming together as they had. Humiliated by their defeat, free to fight on a single front, and now possessing newer and better ships, the Klingons, had come storming back. The opportunistic Lyrans had begun grabbing their own shares of Hydran space. (Hocs shuddered, thinking of the vicious fangfaces. The rumors *couldn't* be true, could they?) Even the rebuilt ship classes the Kingdom had now could not hold them. Huce had told her of the battle that ended his active service...

Bridge, Hydran Destroyer *Guard* not far from the Hydran capital, three months earlier

"Status?" asked the somehow still calm voice of Captain H'rulk.

Margrave, his Executive Officer, replied. "#2 shield down, #1 half strength. Right Nova Cannon destroyed, as well as half the phasers. Massive damage to crew quarters and storage, tractors offline, and engines at 50%. Those drones hurt us badly."

He marveled once more at his captain, who never seemed to get upset or desperate, no matter how dire a situation became, then turned back to his console whose alerts indicated more danger from the ships swirling around them.

Huce, in his Marine battle armor near the main turbolift, watched them both. Two of his tentacles were badly hurt, after

his impact with the bulkhead when the scatterpack hit. They'd used up their single mine earlier against another drone swarm, and the medium range battering they were taking, mainly from the cruiser that had seemed to pick them out for a target, had weakened their shields and energy reserves.

The phasers hadn't stopped enough of the missiles, and the results were ominous. Huce didn't know what triple-cursed alien had thought up shuttles stuffed with drones, but he heartily hated the edge they were giving the Klingons now. They'd wait until they had worn you down, and sapped your speed, then came the drones.

A brief flare of energy from the main screen brought more bad news. "*Warden* is destroyed, Captain. This is getting completely out of hand. We must retreat!" urged Margrave.

"To where?" whispered H'rulk, almost to himself. Then he straightened. "Starboard turn, increase speed to maximum! Target the cruiser when at 20k range!"

"Captain, that frigate is coming up to short range on our starboard flank..."

"Don't worry, I've been keeping an eye on it, the weapons won't cycle until we'll have a fresh shield showing."

Margrave's slight grin of relief turned to horror when the sensor tech shouted "Captain! Sensors show the frigate is a commando variant! Facing shield on Klingon frigate is down! Transporter activity!"

Huce instinctively started toward his Captain as fuzzy shapes began to materialize on the Bridge. Armored aliens began firing, even as Huce's fusion pistols tore a hole through one's torso, and his sharp blade impaled another's neck. A flash of gratitude for having more limbs to fight with than his Klingon foes was cut short when a burst of agony hit his side. Turning slowly, he saw a dark grinning face, white teeth clenched in victory, as the dagger was withdrawn, his lifeblood gushing out as well. The Bridge grew dark, and the last thing Huce saw was H'rulk falling to another disruptor blast...

Unlicensed Cargo Ship *PM856*

Hocs looked again at her brother's long scar. He had survived, and had eventually recovered, physically at least. But the trauma had changed him, and everything in his life was dark and dying now. Reaching out with two tentacles to offer a reassuring touch, Hocs was startled when Huce jerked violently, then threw himself at his sister, screaming insults at him.

"And YOU! You ... engineers! You can't even design ships with a decent long-range weapon! And the weapons you *do* give us can't focus all their firepower anywhere but straight ahead! The Klingons are not *stupid*, they *know* these things! It winds up being our cannons against their phasers, their disruptors, and the Lyran force spheres. So we have to close hard, and now against superior numbers. You've left us to *die!*" In a surge of panicked energy, Hocs threw her brother off. Her frustration boiled over as well, and though she knew it wasn't Huce's fault, she raged back with his own anger.

"What do you *want* from us? Do you think we're deliberately giving you second-rate weapons? Sure, let's build more of those hellguns than we have materials for. Or maybe we could weld a nova cannon on the front of our shuttles, and send them to give you some cover. Of course, they're so slow, have no shields, we'd need some seriously suicidal idiots to fly them into battle, but hey, you're the *military*, you have no shortage of *those!*"

Both siblings wound down, panting, and looked ashamed. Muttered apologies were exchanged, and family tentacles squeezed reassuringly. Huce looked up with a thought. "Maybe we could steal...?"

Hocs laughed. "Sure, we could slip spies easily into Klingon space and steal their disruptor technology. Like *that's* ever gonna happen..." Huce laughed, if a little shamefaced.

"How much longer is this trip going to take? Can we trust the criminals to take us to our drop off point safely?"

"I don't know, sibling. Who can ever trust these criminals? But with the size of the bribe the guilds paid, even half at first, half on delivery, I doubt they'd find it ... profitable ... to betray us."

One of the injured females nearby let out a loud lamentation to the gods, begging for help in their distress. Hocs caught a whiff of burned, infected flesh, and turned away, uncomfortable. When she turned back and saw Huce's expression, she was shocked.

"That smell...oh gods, *no!*" Huce sank to the chilled decking, overcome by agony...

Corridors of Lyran Destroyer *Render* Near the mess hall, a year earlier

"Come on, *move*, Huce! The fangfaces are catching up! We've got to get *out* of here!" Subaltern Lewan pulled his exhausted fellow Marine towards the designated transporter pickup point. "No second chance if you miss the beam, small one!"

I hate it when he calls me that, thought Huce, muzzily. He'd caught a glancing disruptor shot to the head, and would have been easily captured without Lewan's aid. Suddenly he was shoved through the doors, and crashed into several carts. The other Marine hastily dove through and followed him, firing back as he rolled.

"Got him! Ok, I think it's clear now. Time to go, Huce. Huce?" The smaller Hydran had frozen, staring at something hanging off the closest cart. "Is.... is that...?"

"It doesn't *matter*, time to *go!*" screamed Lewan, dragging Huce along, but not without a last horrified glance at the cart.

Unlicensed Cargo Ship *PM856*

Huce became aware of his sister shaking him, bellowing his name. "Snap out of it! You're all right, wake up!"

He shuddered, finally gaining control of himself. "Sorry. Bad memories..." His eyes hardened after a moment. "We better pray if we're found, it's the Klingons. You know what the fangfaces will do with us..."

Lyran's.

Hocs thought of all the nightmare stories she'd heard about them. Willing to close with anyone due to the power of their energy spheres, tough durable ships, and terrible ferocity. There seemed to be no way to prevent those powerful energy spheres from ramming into Kingdom ships, when they were in tractor range, you already felt the power.

"You don't *really* believe..."

"*They eat us! I've seen it!* I won't let them take me... I'll... I'll..." Huce wound down to mumbling and incoherent sounds, patting the side of his mat, where Hocs knew he kept his blade hidden. Trying to soothe her brother, Hocs could think of nothing to say.

Bridge, Unlicensed Cargo Ship *PM856*

Commander Mikel was weighing options. They were getting reasonably close to the designated point his stinky passengers wanted to be left at, but he was very unsure if their promised second half of the payment would actually be waiting, or just promises of payment later. He wondered if he could gouge an extra 'atmospheric' surcharge, given the expenses of pumping methane into his cargo hold, and keeping that cargo hold so cold.

Mikel was a Dunkar, born in space to a family descended from a world in Klingon space. His family, the ship he was born on, two ships he had served on, and the ship he now commanded, were technically illegal. Not pirates, but smugglers, criminals under Klingon and Hydran laws, but tolerated by both. Thousands of

people from Klingon subject race planets, most of them political refugees but some of them spies for Klingon intelligence, lived on oxy-nitrogen worlds in Hydran space. The Hydrans tolerated this "illegal immigration" because these people could exploit planets that the Hydrans themselves could not. The Klingons found the idea of exporting the political troublemakers on subject race planets to Hydran space vaguely amusing.

Both the Klingons and Hydrans tolerated "unlicensed" freighters crossing the border because the trade made a profit for both the Empire and the Kingdom. The very term was an oxymoron, since unlicensed freighters had duly-registered permits from both the Kingdom and the Empire, and were watched more or less closely by the police on both sides. That the freighters were "unlicensed" simply meant they technically had no home. They were not civilian freighters of the empire, nor were they of the kingdom. Unlicensed freighters were required to broadcast a transponder signal at all times so the local police could track them, but Mikel was not broadcasting this signal, since it would lead Klingon warships directly to him.

The Klingons were offering hard bounty on any Hydrans captured, and Mikel knew they had this 'honor' thing, incomprehensible as that was to him, and only rarely defaulted on promised funds. More importantly, it was clear that the Kingdom was going to fall into Klingon hands, and if Mikel and his ship (and the ships of his brothers, uncles, and cousins) were to continue to find employment, they would have to deal with the Klingons. Hundreds of unlicensed freighters had been caught up in the war, with many of them destroyed or impounded by the Klingon invaders and more than a few destroyed by Hydran warships that questioned their loyalty. The survivors were those that turned off their transponders and kept out of the way, waiting for the dust to settle.

Turning to the comm officer, he made a decision.

Captain's cabin, IKV *Bloodkill*, Klingon D4 cruiser.

The comm whistle woke Commander Kilgar from dreams of crushing the Empire's foes.

"What do you want?" he snapped blearily at the communications officer.

"Unlicensed Cargo Ship *PM856* is hailing you personally, Captain."

Gathering his wits, Kilgar snarled at the nervous comm. "Transfer the signal here.

"Well?"

The orange face smiled at him. "Are you still paying for Hydran prisoners, Kilgar?"

The smile on both faces was nearly identical.

Cargo Hold, Unlicensed Cargo Ship *PM856*

Huce woke from his exhausted sleep. He saw Hocs in contemplation, which she did so often these dark days. Speaking quietly, since he had no desire to increase the gloom around him, nor be accused of treason, he broached the forbidden subject. "Do you see any chance for us to survive?"

Hocs seemed to deflate in on herself, but she would not lie to her brother. "No, not realistically. We can't match their numbers, and we have trouble matching them one on one. Our new dreadnought class has engine problems, and the damned Guilds won't let us refit enough tugs to advanced warp to match their troop deployments and supplies.

Her head came up then. "But just *try* and tell me *any* other fleet would do as well in our situation. No allies, no borders that aren't *filled* with enemies, fighting the short-sighted greedheaded penny pinchers who won't even give us what we need to survive ... not without a battle."

Her eyes swept over the dejected refugees surrounding them.

"We've beaten the Klingons and Lyrans more than once, and we've done our best to make any future invasion too expensive and difficult a task for them. I cannot understand how we have been defeated."

Huce was about to tell her not to say things like that, Fate would not be tempted, when the ship shuddered and surged.

"That's a tractor beam! Someone is attacking!" rapped Huce. His depression seemed to vanish, and Hocs saw again a skilled, proud Marine as her brother rolled over his mat and came up holding his battle blade. "Any idea who?"

"No, but no way is this a good thing. Find something to fight with..."

Bridge, Unlicensed Cargo Ship *PM856*

Mikel frowned at Kilgar's image on the viewer. "No need for a tractor, Klingon. We're not running away from you!"

The swarthy warrior laughed in his face. "Just giving your 'hijacking story' a little realism, Mikel. If you lower your shields, instead of making me lower them for you, the hull damage will be minimal when my troops beam over to take charge of your... 'guests'. Out."

Mikel shut off the screen, pounding one fist into another. "This deal is getting worse all the time." He angrily snapped the intership. "Weldon! Take your troops and meet the Klingons near the cargo bay. Give them what they want; they've paid for it. But keep an eye on them, and make sure they don't pull any tricks."

Near the cargo hold, Unlicensed Cargo Ship *PM856* a few minutes later

Weldon gave the lead warrior a brief nod. "You want us to bleed off the atmosphere?" Kleth, Sergeant of the Klingon Marines, rolled his eyes, and fired a disruptor burst into the wall next to the Dunkar, enjoying it too much as the orange man flinched away. *These bloodless fools don't have the faintest inkling of what honor or courage was all about.* He almost laughed at the merchant 'guards' trying to look tough in defense of their 'leader'.

"Retribution smells better when you're close enough to look in your enemy's eyes, as you turn the knife inside him. Do you want an example?" Weldon couldn't back away fast enough, and the other Klingons laughed. Kleth pulled his faceplate down, sealed his suit, drew his dagger, and pointed at the door. His second in command readied his energy weapon.

Cargo Hold, Unlicensed Cargo Ship *PM856*

The fear and anxiety inside the cargo bay had skyrocketed with the shaking. Some didn't even seem to react, too far gone in their own despair. The occasional clang and crash from outside heightened the stress. A few, clutching makeshift weapons, shuffled toward Hocs and Huce who were standing near the entry hatch. Huce had identified the most recent noise as a Klingon disruptor.

"Klingon weapons have a different pitch, trust me, I know." he had explained to the others.

"Do you think they'll take us prisoner?" murmured Hocs.

"Not likely, not without killing half of us first. We can't even breathe the same atmosphere, so why should they bother keeping us alive when that costs them power? This is the end of all things."

Hocs felt a strange lightness. "Even if this is the ebb of the Kingdom, Huce, remember every ebb has its flow. Look at the bright side, you won't have to worry about those Guild debt markers any more..."

"And if this is our end, brother, I am glad it comes with you. We go together, and we go down fighting! Someday the Hydran people will rise again in victory!"

Huce smiled one last time. "I can still smell the despair. But courage smells better, don't you think?"

Hocs' reply was lost when the hatch blew in.

STAR FLEET COMMUNICATIONS CENTER



Due to space limitations, *Captain's Log* only publishes the "game rule critical" elements of the after action report, not the entire list of comments, typos, and notes.

But now, with *Captain's Log Supplemental*, we can show you the entire files. You have been warned.

CAPTAIN'S LOG #37

Page #16: FICTION: Hit-and-Run, 14:20:27: Jakob muses about being killed in hand-to-hand combat in the twenty-third century, but the dates given in *Federation Commander* make it the twenty-sixth century.

Page #44: (SL264.45): The reference to 'legendary gunners' should have been to 'legendary weapons officers'.

Page #45: (SL265.0): SET UP: The starting positions for the Klingon forces should be within five hexes of 0625, not 3706.

Page #48: (SL266.0): Some complained that the historical outcome did not list the fate of the units involved. This was because the scenario was not "historical", but generic, and the historical outcome was just further discussion of one of the oddities of Andromedan operations, i.e., that they pressed on into the Milky Way without completely securing their base in the Magellanic Cloud.

Page #64: (S8.7): Some were unclear on how this system was used. Essentially you can buy any of the organized units at a discount, and then if you wish buy trucks (or APVs) to move them around. You might buy several companies and transport for only one of them for example. But you cannot purchase the transportation element without first purchasing the unit that would ride in the transportation element. The headquarters units presented for the elements here are standard for "ground combat" as opposed to "ship" units. They supercede the data for headquarters units of the Marine organizations that are carried by ships for operations. It should be obvious that buying trucks for an infantry battalion turns it into a "motorized battalion"; buying APVs for an infantry battalion turns it into a "mobile battalion"; buying GCVs for an infantry battalions turns it into a "Mechanized Battalion". While no standard listing for an independent infantry company was given, the company organizations found in Module M could be used, but there would be no reduction in costs for purchasing such a company.

Page #79, *Federation & Empire* Q&A, Part 1, 4th question: Q: Does (525.318), the rule about the Hydran Pegasus shipyard, mean they get one per turn even if not at war? The answer to this should have been "A: You can build one Pegasus per year, not per turn, even if not at war."

Page #81: *Federation & Empire* Q&A, Part 2: Battleship Fighters; last sentence should read: "A fighterless battleship costs the

same 36 points as a battleship with fighters, but does not pay for fighters under (436.21)."

Page #85: *Federation & Empire* (323.34) ". . . to the another player." Should read "...to the other player."

Page #98: (R5.214) The command rating for this ship is "7" as listed on the SSD, and this is its *Federation & Empire* command rating as well.

Page #98: The master ship chart entry for "Race" should be "Empire".

Page #106: (R12.A5) SSD: The drone rack should be type-BX with triple reloads. The pseudo-plasma torpedoes should be A-A-B-B like they are on the ISC DDX.

Page #107: (R12.A6) SSD: The disruptors on this ship should be range-22, not range 30.

Page #108: (R12.A7) SSD: The disruptors on this ship should be range-22, not range 30.

Page #109: (R12.A8): This has the same identifier, "GFF," as the conjectural WYN gunfighter frigate in *Captain's Log #28*, but as the gunfighter frigate was never built there should be little confusion.

Page #114: The D7V card is listed as a strike cruiser, should be strike carrier.

(Page #117) Of the Large Print Edition: The last line of the section detailing the Reserve Movement ruling is cut off by the top part of the art for the Hydran Monarch in the large print edition. The text should read: "The pinning ship(s) left behind in a non-objective hex are no longer a reserve, and as such, they are eligible for withdrawal before combat."

Page #119: (R11.A16) SSD: The *Federation Commander* side of the SSD shows four boarding parties, the *Star Fleet Battles* side of the SSD shows four crew units of boarding parties, the *Federation Commander* side is correct.

MODULE OMEGA 5

(OK1.115) The word "modes" in "have a turn modes" should be "mode".

(OK1.21) The period after "afterburners" should be a comma.

(OK1.234) The word "of" should be added between "points" and "power" in "17 points power from".

(OK1.241) This rule number should not be indented.

(OK1.242) This rule number should not be indented.

(OK1.243) This rule number should not be indented.

(OK1.48) The word "of" should be added between "number" and "implosive" in "the number implosive and enveloping".

(OM2.2) O26: The comma after "every other turn" should be a period.

(OM2.314) The period at the end of the first sentence should be a colon.

(OR1.B0) This rule number was used simply as a header to show that what follows were more rules for bases in the Omega Octant.

(OR1.B013) There should be a comma between "provide" and "dictated" in "to provide dictated their designs".

(OR1.F1) First paragraph: The last line "Hiver fighters are the only ones presented in this product." Should be deleted. Second paragraph: The first use of "Omega #2" should be in italics.

(OR1.F22) The word "Ths" in "Ths is irrespective" should be "This".

(OR1.F22) The second use of this rule number should be

(OR1.F23).
 (OR1.F3) Alunda, this should read: One squadron is eight fighters, the maximum number that can be brought to a battle is 24 fighters.”
 (OR1.F3) first paragraph: The word “give” in “Any give empire” should be “given”. The word “the” should be added before “Omega Octant” in the first sentence. Each race uses “one squadron is x fighters, the max number is y fighters” formula. The comma in the middle should be a semi-colon.
 (OR1.F4) The title for this rule should be in bold. The word “of” should be added between “because” and “the” in “because the energy demands”. Petrick should probably have just titled the rule ‘FIGHTER SUBSTITUTIONS’.
 (OR1.F41) One instance of “to replace” in “chose to replace to replace” should be deleted. The word “heaven” in “any heaven fighter” should be “heavy”.
 (OR1.F42) The parenthesis in “fighters (those whose” should be a square bracket, and the closing bracket (currently missing) should be after “(=)”.
 (OR1.F5) The word “WARFAREPODS” in the title should be two words.
 (OR1.PF3) flotilla size list: Each race uses “PFL and x PFs, the max number is y PFs” formula. The comma in the middle should be a semi-colon. First paragraph: The word “flotillas” in “counting as a flotillas” should be singular. The word “give” in “Any give empire” should be “given”. Fourth paragraph: The comma after “LORIYILL” should be deleted. “LORIYILL” should be “LORIYILL”. Fifth paragraph: “Qixa” should be capitalized.
 (OR2.F11) RULE: Delete the last sentence as it is a repeat of the sentence two sentences before it.
 (OR2.F13) RULE: The word “Tazol” should be “Tazol”.
 (OR2.F23) RULE: The reference to the “IMFb” should be “IMFa”, since there is no “IMFb”.
 (OR2.F24) RULE: The first instance of “the” in “with the both the ASF” should be deleted.
 (OR3.F12) RULE: The reference to “AFP” should be “FPA”.
 (OR3.PF2) SSD: The firing arc for the ACG generators in the rear of the PFs is RH.
 (OR4.F4) RULE: The word “during” should be added between “space” and “the” in “into Mæsron space the Mæsron collapse”.
 (OR4.F8) RULE: The reference to (OR3.F4) should be to (OR4.F4).
 (OR4.15) RULE: The date “Y2199+” in the escort/fighter box should be “Y199+”.
 (OR4.F14) RULE: The reference to “SF-A” should be “SFa”.
 (OR6.F11) RULE: The title of this fighter should have a “-A” at the end (i.e., ADVANCED FELDSPAR TORPEDO FIGHTER-A).
 (OR6.13) SSD On the right hull, the mechlink shading is in the Transporter boxes instead of the Tractor boxes. So the Trac/Tran labels should be swapped to make the ship symmetric.
 (OR8.B01) RULE: The word “respect” should be “respects”. There should be a close parenthesis before the period in the last sentence.
 (OR8.F8) RULE: The word “the” in “fighter and the operating” should be removed.
 (OR9.B01) RULE: Second paragraph: The word “base” should be added between “ground” and “is” in “small ground is not”. Third paragraph: This paragraph/sentence should be deleted since this rule is giving general rules about ground bases and all of the specific base descriptions include the SSD/counter note.
 (OR9.B3) RULE: The Ship Type for this base should be “GPC”.
 (OR9.F) Remora SSD: All of the Remora Fighter Data Tables list the plasma whips (PWs) as PW3.
 (OR12.12) RULE: The references to this ship being based on the destroyer are wrong, it is based on the frigate.
 (OR12.PF) Survey PF SSD: The Special Sensor shading is not centered in the box.
 (OR14.11) RULE: In the escort/fighter box, the “1xS3” should be “11xS3”.

(OR14.M15) RULE: First paragraph, the word “the” in “normally in the either” should be deleted.
 (OR16.F6) RULE: “sub space” should be one word. This occurs three times in this rule.
 (OR16.PF5) RULE: The word “that” in “rather that antiproton” should be “than”.
 (OR17.B3) RULE: The word “Fighters” just before the reference to (OR17.F10) should not be capitalized.
 (OR17.B4) RULE: The Ship Type for this base should be “GPC-F”.
 (OR18.B2) SSD: Prior to Y175 two of the APRs on this base are batteries to operate the sonic pulsers.
 (OR18.B3) SSD: Prior to Y175 four of the APRs on this base are batteries to operate the sonic pulsers.
 (OR18.F5) RULE: The reference to year 190 should be “Y190”.
 (OR21.B3) RULE: The ship type for this unit should be GPC-PF.
 (OR22.B3) RULE: The ship type for this base should be “GPF”.
 (OSG1.461) The word “a” should be added between “on” and “hex-side” in “troops on hex-side”.
 (OSG1.462) The word “part” in “one boarding part” should be “party”.
 (OSG3.0) Delete the comma after “they,” in “borders, they, learned”.
 (OSG4.2) Player A Set Up: There should be a comma after the word “max”. Player B Set Up: “player-A’s” should be “Player A’s”.
 (OSG4.451) Both instances of “player B” should be “Player B”. The word “the” in “determine the which empire” should be deleted.
 (OSG4.455) The word “transport” should be “transporter”?
 (OSG5.2) Player B Set Up: “totally” should be “totaling”. Player B Set Up: The reference to (OG5.45) should be (OSG5.45).
 (OSG5.41) Delete the comma after “C,” in “directions C, or D”. The reference to (OG5.45) should be (OSG5.45).
 (OSG5.421) Reference to (OSG3.431) should be to (OSG5.431).
 (OSG5.45) Capitalize the word “player” in “from player A’s unit”.
 (OSG5.45) Delete the word “the” in “enter the Player A’s”.
 (OSG5.5) Two instances of “player B” should be “Player B”.
 Annex #03 FRA SCS: The War Ship Status should be “CNJ”.
 Annex #03 FRA PFT: The War Ship Status should be “CNJ”.
 Annex #03 FRA GPC: The War Ship Status should be “CNJ”.
 Annex #03 FRA GPF: The War Ship column should be “CNJ”.
 Annex #03 Qixa: The “inside the cloud” line for each ship has “See Note” in the Notes Column (the note tells about the inside-the-cloud BPV). To be consistent with *Module Omega #4*, “See Note” should be an asterisk.
 Annex #03 Ymatrian GPC: The Ship Type for the GPC should be “GPC-F”.
 Annex #03B Qixa PFs: The “inside the cloud” line for each PF has “See Note” in the Notes Column (the note tells about the inside-the-cloud BPV). To be consistent with *Module Omega #4*, “See Note” should be an asterisk.
 Annex #03B There is a note in *Module G2* that all PFs are nimble, but are not marked “N” in the Notes Column. Because of this, all of the “N” in the PF Notes Column can be deleted.
 Annex #04 Mæsron MC: The Prod column should be *Omega #5*. The Ref column should be (OR2.F19).
 Annex #04 Mæsron MF: The Prod column should be *Omega #2*. The Ref column should be (OR2.F3).
 Annex #4: (OR9.F) If a fighter’s entry on the master fighter chart says that it can use whipcrack torpedoes (OFP7.34) it means that the use of whipcrack torpedoes as listed was factored into the fighter’s BPV. The player does not have to pay additional BPV when purchasing the fighter to use this capability.
 Annex #04: The Alunda MRS, as given in (OR1.S2) and (OFP7.34), can both its plasma whips armed as whipcrack torpedoes and could launch one or both of them in a given turn, on the same or different impulses, and at the same or different tar-

gets.

Annex #04 Qixa A-4E year in service date should be Y197.

Annex #04 Singer MRS-B: The Missiles column should be "-".

Annex #07G Branthodon BPC: This unit should be GPC.

Annex #07G Ryn BPC: This unit should be GPC-F.

Annex #07G Singer GPC: This unit should be GPC-F.

Annex #10 Federal Republic of Aurora: The units listed on the PF line are not wrapping correctly. The PFQ should be listed under the other PFs, not under the ship type list.

MODULE X1R

(R1.207) RULE: ROTATION: The word "an" in "an BSX can modify" should be "a". SHUTTLE DECK: The reference to (1.1G5) should be (R1.1G5).

(R1.207A) RULE: Last paragraph, the word "civilian" should be added between "technology" and "base" in "advanced technology base stations". There should be a comma between "LDR" and "Seltorian" in the first sentence.

(R2.207) SSD: The movement cost on the SSD, 5/6ths, is correct, the movement cost shown in the Master Ship Chart, 1.0, is wrong.

(R2.207) RULE: The background for the Fed CSX only mentions the *Prometheus*, but does not take account of the two other Strike Cruisers mentioned in FC (and listed in the Starship Name Registry) - the NCC-1637 *Daedalus* and the NCC-1638 *Epimetheus*.

(R2.211) RULE: The names for the Fed NASX-class ships are duplicates of names given to Fed GSCs as they were built to replace those ships. Note that the GSX *Sakharov* survived at least into Y214 so it is unclear when it was lost and when the new ship entered service.

(R2.212) RULE: Second paragraph, the semi-colon after "F5's rear hull;" should be deleted.

(R3.208) RULE: Fourth paragraph, the reference to (R03.R51) should be (R3.R53).

(R3.209) RULE: First paragraph, the word "the" should be added between "of" and "front" in "sectors of front alone".

(R3.211) RULE: First paragraph, the word "to" should be added between "ship" and "reach" in "enable the ship reach optimum".

(R3.213) RULE: First paragraph, the word "war" should be between "heavy" and "destroyer" in "to the heavy destroyer because".

(R4.200N1) RULE: The text "Module X1" should be in italics.

(R4.212) RULE: Fourth paragraph, the word "the" should be between "of" and "Republic's" in "much of Republic's operations".

(R04.214) RULE: First paragraph, the word "were" in "The ship was actually were something" should be deleted.

(R4.216) RULE: Second paragraph, "reserve-power" should not be hyphenated. Names list, delete the extra period after "Striking Hawk".

(R4.219) RULE: Third paragraph, the word "the" should be between "During" and "early" in "During early years".

(R5.206) RULE: Names list, the period after "Many Daggers" should be a comma.

(R5.207) RULE: First paragraph, the semi-colon and comma in "fleets; or held in small squadrons by the various fleets," should be switched.

(R5.212) RULE: first paragraph, one instance of "to this design" in "under-construction HDW to this design to this design in Y184" should be deleted. The text "and two more in subsequent years," should be "and two more were built in subsequent years;"

(R8.206) RULE NUMBER: Duplicate ship number in X1R, (R8.206) was given to the Orion Free Traitor-X in Module X1 (counter, no SSD) and also to the BRX in Module X1R (SSD and counter).

(R9.209) SSD: The Optional Weapon mounts on both the ship display and the "Weapon Options" table should have been labeled "E" and "F", not "D" and "E".

(R12.205) RULE NUMBER: was originally assigned to the DDX in *Module X1*, but when that ship was published in *Module C3* it was renumbered (R12.28), so (R12.205) was reassigned to this ship in *Module X1R*.

(R12.206) RULE NUMBER: was originally assigned to the CAX in *Module X1*, but when that ship was published in *Module C3* it was renumbered (R12.29), so (R12.206) was reassigned to this ship in *Module X1R*.

(R12.209) OBX BPV: This ship should have a BPV of 210.

(R15.39) RULE: Last sentence, "or oher unit" should be "or other unit".

(XS8.48) ADDITION: Advanced technology scouts based on light cruiser/war cruiser hulls can take the "free scout slot", but this is under the same restriction as the Federation GSX, i.e., they count against the allowed total of three light cruiser hulls in the advanced technology battle force. Note that as light cruisers can substitute for heavy cruisers in such a battle force under (XS8.48), a force consisting of (for example) two heavy cruisers, three light cruisers, and one light scout cruiser is legal. Advanced technology carriers, scout carriers, and PF tenders also operate under these restrictions, e.g., a Hydran Cavilier-X counts against the number of heavy cruiser hulls, and a Hydran Vagabond-X would count against the number of light cruiser hulls. For purposes of this rule, advanced technology heavy war destroyers count as a light cruises, not as size class 4 units.

(SH246.0) GRAPHIC: The image for the Hive Ship is of a six-bay Nest Ship rather than a Hive Ship.

(SH247.0) BACKGROUND: Some were confused by the date of this scenario noting that the timeline says the Echelon of Judgment repelled an attack in on the ISC capital in Y190. This scenario is set in Y189 because the Y190 date is tied to a single Dominator, but the Echelon of Judgment was first recalled to repel an attack by two Dominators (R13.200). The Echelon of Judgment was definitely in Klingon space and trying to reach an agreement to withdraw from that space in Y189 (SH164.0). The background for the ISC CWX (R13.215) does not conflict with this as assaults on the various homeworlds of the ISC were on going, slowly reducing the defenses of each. The overall general assault on the rest of the Alpha Octant followed the assaults on the ISC. The scenario graphic is missing one of the CLX hulls.

(SH247.45) The reference to the Echelon of Justice should have been to the Echelon of Judgment.

(XE15.35) The reference to (XE15.4) should be (XE15.40).

(XE15.41) The word "a" in "ability to a serve" should be deleted.

(XE16.1) X-shield crackers fired in damage mode are treated as any other direct-fire weapon for purposes of magellanic VRF.

(XE16.53) The reference to (D16.3) should be (E16.3).

(XR2.31) The listing "type-GX drone" should be "type-GX drone rack".

(XR3.1) The reference to (XP3.12) should be (XR3.12).

(XR3.11) One instance of "ship" in "an XP-ship ship can be" should be deleted.

(XR4.1) The parenthetical "[anything covered by (XR4.1)]" should be "[anything covered by (XR4.0)]".

(XR4.23) The references to *size class 2, or size class 1* should be deleted as they cannot have heavy weapon upgrades.

(XR4.25) Plasma-D racks should have an exception to the restriction in (XR4.1) allowing them to be upgraded on a size class 1 or size class 2 unit as is indicated in (XR8.0).

(XR4.29) ESGs should have an exception to the restriction in (XR4.1) allowing them to be upgraded on a size class 1 or size class 2 unit as is indicated in (XR8.0).

(XR4.36) IPGs should have an exception to the restriction in (XR4.1) allowing them to be upgraded on a size class 1 or size class 2 unit as is indicated in (XR8.0).

(XR5.2) The first comma in "standard ADDs, there are no X-ADDs, X-ADD racks" should be a semi-colon, the second comma should be a period. The word "of" should be added between "cost" and



FEDERATION COMMANDER



COMA NOTES

THE BOLD AND THE OBVIOUS

The following Command Notes were not published as they are too obvious, and comprise things “everybody already knows.” Even so, they might be of interest to new players. There is nothing “wrong” or “incorrect” or even “invalid” about these tactics; they’re just nothing new. These do not count for promotion.

FEDERATION COMMANDER DRONE KILLING TACTICS

— *Cadet James McCubbin, USS Ohio*

When playing against a drone-using race, if your enemy out drones you, you can use your drone racks to help counter his drones. The problem is that at close range the enemy drone launch can hit you before you can launch counter drones. To help overcome this simply pay deceleration as needed to give you more time. This will work if the drones are launched four or more hexes from their target (you), assuming you are headed at the drones. If running, pay the acceleration to buy more time. If you time it right you will not only have close range phaser/drone shots for yourself, but for any other allied ship nearby. They can help by launching drones or shooting phasers to kill the incoming drone swarm. Do not forget that deceleration pulses still help fulfill your turn mode, so this may give you more tactical opportunities as well.

THE KZINTI DRONE ANCHOR

— *Cadet Michael E. Stiles, USS Louisiana*

Unfortunately, the Kzintis are at a severe disadvantage in *Federation Commander* since their drones have a maximum speed of only 24. All a ship has to do to avoid a drone is move at speed 24 away from the drones. The drones will never catch the enemy ship. To help counter this, plan to overrun the enemy ship, then launch your drones one hex away when closing, just before the overrun. There is no explosion damage in *Federation Commander*, so that is not a concern. Tractor the enemy ship so that he cannot escape your drones. Please note that you may have to pay for a deceleration ensuring the drones impact the ship. Now pound on it with the phaser-3s.

DOUBLE DRONE LAUNCHES

— *Cadet Michael E. Stiles, USS Louisiana*

Unfortunately, the Kzintis are at a severe disadvantage in *Federation Commander* since the Kzinti heavy battlecruiser can only launch a maximum of three drones when playing in fleet scale, while the Lyran still has an ESG that can take all that damage and still knock the Kzinti ship about. To counter this situation, the Kzinti player must launch late in one turn and early in the next turn. This will leave that Lyran with one drone inbound that must be shot down prior to hitting his ship, which will be less firepower going into the Kzinti's shields and/or ship.

KZINTI TACTICAL OPERATIONS

— *Cadet Michael E. Stiles, USS Louisiana*

Unfortunately, the Kzintis are at a severe disadvantage in *Federation Commander* since they no longer have scatter packs. To counter this, have one ship in your fleet launch at the same ship you have targeted. This will ensure an overwhelming drone wave, which should give you the advantage on even the largest enemy vessel, while your sister ship takes on one of the other smaller enemy ships.

THE KEY TO MANEUVER

— *Cadet Michael E. Stiles, USS Louisiana*

For larger ships, side slipping is the way to get around the turn mode problem. For the smaller and more nimble ships, turning multiple times in a turn is quite natural. To know when a larger ship should turn, do not turn until the enemy goes out of the arc you want him in when you launch, then turn to place the enemy ship back into that arc. This will optimize your angle of pursuit.

SPEED IS KEY

— *Cadet Michael E. Stiles, USS Louisiana*

Speed is life in *Star Fleet Battles* and *Federation Commander*. Plotting speed 24 is a lifesaver due to drone speed limitations. When facing plasma torpedoes, you can always use 24+1 to put your ship at speed 32 until you know that your phasers will reduce the damage to the point that your shields can prevent ship damage.

Comments by the grading judges:

- Apparently ‘Speed is Life’ is not as obvious as it would seem. Several newcomers I have recently encountered continually plotted baseline speeds of eight to have more available power during the turn.
- Move fast versus plasma, wow . . .
- It is a completely valid point to move base speed 24 when facing armed plasma, but it's also very obvious and basic.

THE TAU OF OVERLOADING

— *Cadet Michael E. Stiles, USS Louisiana*

Never plan on overloads, just take them when you can. Why? Because speed is life and that is primary. Take your shots when the firing is optimal to the impulse chart and not necessarily to the range. In essence, plink them to death.

Comments by the grading judges:

- Very obvious.
- With all reserve power, no NEED to ‘choose’ overloads in Energy Allocation . . .
- For all published weapons other than photons, this is irrelevant, as you can only overload at the instant of firing. So, you cannot violate the idea if you wanted to. With photons, this is a legitimate tactic, but it is self-limiting, as it all but prevents you from using 16 point overloads.

NOT A GOOD GAME PLAN

The following Command Notes were not published because the tactics are invalid, a bad idea, a good way to get killed, or illegal under the rules. We publish them here (without the names of the authors) as an example of what not to do.

MARINE HIT-AND-RUN TARGET PRIORITIES

For marine hit-and-run operations, target any hull sections, tractors, transports, auxiliary control, emergency bridge, and flag bridge locations. This will remove the 'seventh shield' effect.

Comments by the grading judges:

- This is a poor doctrine to become accustomed to using. Hit-and-Run raids are usually better used on more valuable, more expensive to repair systems.

- Raid important stuff. Too obvious.

- This is completely wrong. These boxes are the *last* place you want to hit in Federation Commander. They are easy to repair (meaning they can repair multiple of these boxes in one turn), which quickly negates the effect. Also, since there are no guards, there is no reason to not try and hit the most important targets (weapons and power and tractors) every time.

KZINTI, THE DIRTY TRICK KNIFE FIGHTER

This paper includes a rules error, in that rule (5D6b) states that the ship spending more energy, not the faster ship, controls the movement. In the case of a good paper with an error on a tangential point, the author would have been told to fix it. This paper, however, was considered so basic and obvious that even with the mistake corrected, it was not publishable.

Experienced *Star Fleet Battles* players have become accustomed to the doctrine that a Kzinti should keep a wall of drones between him and the enemy and use the occasional phaser and disruptor to snipe at enemy shields while waiting for the right time to move in closer for the kill. However, in *Federation Commander*, the tractor beam rules give the Kzintis an advantage. This tactic can be especially useful when fighting the Klingons.

In *Federation Commander*, if you are the faster ship holding another ship in a tractor beam, you control the movement of the other ship. This means the other ship may not turn unless he does a high-energy turn. What this means to the Kzinti is that, even though at first glance it looks like he should avoid going toe to toe with his Klingon counterpart, the Klingon may be surprised how well the Kzinti can knife-fight.

Here is how you win a knife fight against a Klingon. Plot the same or faster speed than the Klingon. Launch only one drone and one suicide shuttle. Both of these systems are likely to be disabled in the upcoming offensive fire phase.

Charge the Klingon and end the Impulse at Range 1. After the Klingon hits you with his overloaded weapons and phasers, you will start to think, "This was a dumb idea why did I try this stupid tactic?" Hold on, your turn is coming. Target the Klingon's weapons with your phaser-3s and non-overloaded disruptors. This will take down his shield and do a few internals. Targeting his weapons will increase the chance that you will disable one of his tractor beams.

Next, engage your tractor beam and hold the Klingon ship. You must win this tractor auction. The Klingon should be very low on power since he overloaded his disruptors and fired more weapons than you did.

You now control his movement and he may not turn away unless he does a high-energy turn. If you are both going the same base speed neither of your ships will move. If the Klingon accelerates then you will need to accelerate as well to prevent any movement. This keeps the same down shields facing each other.

Now conduct hit-and-run raids on his tractor beams and then launch your remaining drones and the largest suicide shuttle you can afford. All the drones will enter his down shield on the next impulse.

Since the Klingon just shot you in the face he will not have enough weapons left to shoot down every drone. He will likely use tractor beams for drone defense. With a little luck, your first drone will impact and get a tractor hit. That will release another drone with an increased chance of another tractor hit.

If possible, follow up the drone hits with another suicide shuttle next impulse through the same down shield. Finish the turn with your last hit-and-run raid against any tractor beam holding one of your drones, since the Klingon probably used a frame hit to protect his last tractor beam. Between hit-and-run raids and drone hits, you have a good chance of disabling all of his tractor beams and scoring a large amount of internal damage.

The best part of this tactic is that all the damage you can inflict on him is on the same down shield. Any empire can perform this tactic, but since drones do not use any power, the Kzintis are in an ideal position to take full advantage of the tractor beam rules in *Federation Commander*.

RETROGRADE IN FEDERATION COMMANDER

To use the Kaufmann Retrograde in *Federation Commander*, move speed 24 on Turn #1 to place your ship near the center of the board. Execute an emergency deceleration on Impulse #8 of Turn #1 to ready your ship for the next turn: fire phasers and launch drones. You may fire one photon torpedo on Impulse #8. Plot a speed of eight in reverse to establish the parameters of the retrograde. Kill enemy ships as they close; if the enemy ships do not have the speed to close within overload range, just wait and fire phasers and launch drones. You may fire one photon torpedo on Impulse #8. Notice the firing of one photon torpedo per turn and only on Impulse #8. This ensures always having a photon torpedo, which can be overloaded at the last second, ready to hurt your enemy.

Comments by the grading judges:

- This only works if you are flying a Federation ship, you are in open space, and your opponent is willing to cooperate. Retrogrades are best used when defending a fixed position, and then they can only be used for a limited time.

- This is one of the things *Federation Commander* was tweaked to prevent! Double movement cost for reverse movement gets you caught.

- This does not actually work. Since it costs double to move in reverse, someone trying to retrograde is either a virtual sitting duck (speed 8 or less) or is using so much power to move, they cannot fire weapons.

AGAINST THE HYDRANS

Against the Hydrans, always send your escort(s) to engage the Stingers while your capital ship(s) engages their ships and maneuver so that the suicide shuttle becomes a defensive weapon if they try to overrun your position. Additionally, if you can maneuver and time it correctly, the Kaufmann Retrograde will improve your odds.

Comments by the grading judges:

- Good way to get your escorts toasted.

- First, it refers to a tactic (the retrograde) that does not work in *Federation Commander*. (If you try to retrograde against Stingers in *Federation Commander*, you will die.) Second, it tries to make use of suicide shuttles against fast opponents. There is not anything here.

SFB DATABASE

More from: Ask Admiral Growler

WEAPON QUESTIONS

Douglas Mazur asks: At Range 0, overloaded photons score feedback damage equal to 1/4 of the warhead strength of all the photons that actually hit the target. Assume some cloak effect that results in a smaller percentage of actual damage. Is the feedback based on the amount of actual damage scored? Or is it based on the total warhead strength for any photons that hit, regardless of the actual amount of damage done?

ANSWER: According to (G13.343), "... feedback damage from overloads (if any) is not reduced by (G13.37)."

ELECTRONIC WARFARE

David Crew asks: A ship has all its warp engines destroyed, shuts them down, and a turn later qualifies for (D19.33) (i.e., the poor mans cloaking device - adding five to the range). Does repairing a warp engine box as an AWR void the (D19.33) benefit? Rule (G17.5) says to treat the box as an AWR for all purposes except damage - but if the AWR is hit on warp engine, surely the warp engines are no longer 'shut down' as required by (D19.33).

ANSWER: If the warp box is repaired as an AWR, then the warp engine is no longer "destroyed" (albeit, it is hardly fully functional, either). You could leave the engines shut down if you want to continue the (D19.33) benefit, but you would have to restart them [voiding (D19.33)] to get the "AWR" power.

Les LeBlanc asks: A plasma torpedo impacts its target in a nebula, if the guiding ship has six ECCM when the plasma torpedo hits does it count as nine ECCM or just three?

ANSWER: If the ship is controlling the plasma torpedo, then its ECCM is added to that of the plasma torpedo (FP4.32), nothing in (P6.61) changes that, the ECCM of a controlling ship is not considered to be scout lending (P6.6), which is proscribed.

REFIT AVAILABILITY

Gary Bear asks: What year is the Federation ECL plus refit available? Most Federation ships get the plus refit starting around Y165. However, the CL-hull gets it sporadically.

CL+ is Y168 (CL is Y120) CLD+ is Y174 (CLD is Y173) CLV+ is Y171 (CLV is Y169)

The ECL is Y171. The + refit in combination with the Y175 refit makes it an ACL (Y175).

Same question for the CLH (Y140), MS (Y158), and CMC (Y125) for their Plus Refits.

ANSWER: I would have to say that most of these ships would receive their plus refit at the same time as the basic CL. The exceptions you note are cases where the ship itself appears after Y168. As for the ECL, I do not know that it ever received the plus refit independent of the full Aegis.

DAMAGE AND REPAIR

Geoff Conn asks: Rule (D9.76) states that "repairs abandoned before they are complete do not count" (towards the repair limit). Nowhere does it state that abandonment must occur during Energy Allocation. As you can abandon arming/holding of numerous items in midturn, can you abandon repairs that would otherwise be finished at end of that turn, so that you can save repair capacity, and begin repairing something else next turn?

ANSWER: The decision to abandon a repair is made when repair points are allocated. Thus if you allocate two points to repair a phaser-3 (or a phaser-1 or phaser-2 as a phaser-3), it will be repaired as a phaser-3 and you cannot stop it. HOWEVER, if you allocated one point to begin the repair, you could abandon the repair at the start of the next turn by not allocating the next point. But you do not get to abandon a repair in mid-turn.

Jim Davies asks: Can you repair a fusion beam while it is cooling down? I cannot find anything to say otherwise, but one does have to wonder if the bits are too hot to touch.

ANSWER: There is no rule stating that a weapon cannot be repaired during its cooling cycle.

Rus Lender-Lundak asks: Can a Neo-Tholian cruiser use up its continuous damage control rating of four repaired systems, then separate the command module and have the module repair an additional two systems based on its damage control rating?

ANSWER: According to (G12.86) the command module would get its full allotment of CDR (within the limits of total CDR available and unused), and the rear hull would subtract that allotment from its allotment. So if the ship has used its full CDR there is no unused CDR for the command module to use.

John Sierra asks: Is APR one of the systems that has to be destroyed before the last excess damage can be hit?

ANSWER: Annex #7E shows all of the allowable damage allocation substitutions. The only things that can be hit on "excess damage" are cargo and repair.

Andy Vancil asks: For a tug with pods capable of independent operation, how many systems can be repaired? For example, take a Federation tug with a battle pod. The tug has a damage control rating of four and the battle pod has damage control of four. So how does this work? Can the pod repair the ship, or only itself? Can the ship repair the pod, or only itself? How many repairs can the combination make in a single turn?

ANSWER: The pod and tug are treated as single unit for all purposes while combined, but this still requires separate accounting. Only four points of CDR can be generated by the combined battle tug each turn, but it can be applied to either unit. Each unit uses its own repair capacity first, so a repair to the pod is charged to the pod's CDR limit unless and until the pod has used all of its CDR, then the tug can use its CDR to repair the pod (and vice versa). Since both the tug and pod are independent units even though combined, the combination can repair a total of eight boxes by CDR, but the player would need to keep a record of which CDR points were used by each unit in the event they separated during the scenario.

This would also apply to any use of EDR. Each element would use its own repair capacity first.

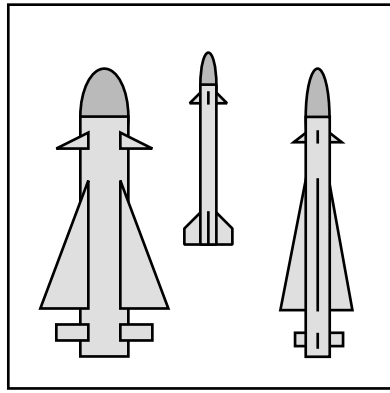
DRONES

Gary Bear asks:

When calculating available Limited/Restricted drone warhead spaces, do ADDs count as "warheads" when used in G and Gx-racks?

Example: A G-Rack with 4xtype-I drones has four warhead spaces.

A G-Rack with 2xtype-Is and 4xADDs has two true warhead spaces, but do you still count it as four spaces for the number of Limited/Restricted drone warheads allowed on the ship?



ANSWER: According to (FD10.643), type-VI drones and ADDs in a G-rack count as general availability.

Follow-up Question: When calculating available Limited/Restricted drone warhead spaces, do type-VI/type-IX dogfight drones in ADDs count as "warhead spaces" (at 0.5 warheads, each)?

Example: 2xB-Racks with 6xtype-Is = six warhead spaces

1xADD with 8xADD and 4xtype-VI = two warhead spaces of non-ADDs

Would the ship count as six spaces or eight spaces to calculate available Limited/Restricted drone warheads? This becomes especially important when there is a non-General Availability speed upgrade that could be applied to the dogfight drones in the ADD rack.

ANSWER: ADD racks do not count even if loaded with type-VI drones (FD10.643), although the type-VI drones themselves in such a rack would be counted as their own separate availability for determining speed upgrades available.

Follow-up Question: Replace one type-VII X-drone with two ADDs on a Gx-rack? (It is not listed in Annex #6 of Module G2, only the "trade in" of a type-I with two ADDs on a G-rack.) Replace one ADD round with a type-IX drone?

ANSWER: In the absence of stated costs, I would have to say that these are zero-cost replacements, although a close reading of the rules would seem to indicate a +0.5 BPV refund for each such exchange of a type-VIII for two type-IX. This would have to be dealt with in the same manner as trading two type-VII drones for one type-VIII drone (XFD10.1).

Roch Chartrand asks: My question is about ballistic targeting. I would like to have a clarification on (F4.11), what exactly does "... evade the target hex ..." and "... adhering as nearly as possible to a course directly opposite its approach course." mean? Is the drone turned around the target hex?!

ANSWER: The term "evade" in this case means that the ballistic seeking weapon continues on a course away from the target hex, continuing in the same direction as before. The drone does not turn around.

Herb Diehr asks: When a shatter pack blossoms, is control needed at that instant, even if the range is less than eight? Over eight?

ANSWER: According to (FD7.3752), type-VI drones do not need to be controlled if they can attain their own lock-on.

Robert Eddy asks: Rule (FD3.5) says a type-E drone rack "can carry no other types" (other than type-VI). Is there an exception to (FD3.5) by another rule allowing ADDs?

ANSWER: You are correct, you cannot load ADDs into a type-E drone rack it can only use type-VI drones.

Ted Fay asks: Between Y77 and Y164, can I build a type-I drone with moderate speed, or must I build a type-II drone? Rules (FD2.1) and (FD2.21) seem to indicate that moderate speed is only for type-II drones. However, (FD10.52) (module cost, drone construction) and (FD10.65) (speed availability) do not appear to restrict moderate speeds to type-II drones. Also, (FD2.1) does not restrict increasing drone speeds under (FD10.0). Thus, under normal drone construction rules (FD10.0) it appears that I can "buy" moderate speed for a type-I drone between Y77 and Y164. This is important because a type-II drone has only two turns of endurance and a type-I drone has three turns of endurance.

Of course, the fact that the cost of building a type-I Moderate-speed drone under (FD10.0) is the same as getting a type-II moderate drone probably indicates that you *must* have a type-II drone if you go for moderate speed. Otherwise, no one would bother with type-IIs. Is there some other availability issue I am missing?

ANSWER: A type-II drone is a type-I drone with moderate speed, i.e., it is burning the drone fuel at a higher rate. Moderate speed (speed 12) and the reduced endurance are tied together, so you cannot build a three-turn moderate speed drone.

Kenneth Jones asks: In (SH4.0) *Cruise Drones*, is the defending frigate aware of how many drones are attacking before Energy Allocation? Rule (SH4.5) does not indicate either way. I presume that the frigate is aware of the number of attacking drones for at least that Turn before Energy allocation, simply because you know what your opponent is in most scenarios before Energy Allocation, unless otherwise indicated in the scenario set up.

ANSWER: The drones appear after Energy Allocation, so the F5 will not know how many will arrive on any given turn. Suck it up and go to war with the ship you have.

Robert Russell Lender-Lundak asks: If I build a type-IV drone with one space of MW, one space of Armor, one ATG Frame mod, how many spaces of Limited would be taken up? How many spaces of Restricted would be taken up? And would there be ANY spaces of either left over to apply to other drones?

ANSWER: This would be one space of Limited and two spaces of Restricted, but note that Restricted spaces include Limited Spaces. This question is incomplete as the answer would depend on the number of drones the unit had and what percentages it was operating under. Assuming it was a Kzinti Skiff (without the Y175 refit), it would have four spaces of drones, 20% of which could be Limited, and up to 50% (including the 20%) could be Restricted (FD10.6). Now, 20% of 4 would be 0.8, which under (FD10.641) rounds up to one space, and 50% of four would be two spaces (but this includes that one space of Limited if you took it). At that particular point, you can have your described drone, and reloads for that drone, but you could not have any more non-General spaces because you have used all of your special allocation. If we changed your Skiff to a Kzinti Police Corvette with two type-A drone racks (we will assume the nose drone rack is a type-E), then you have eight spaces of drones. At that point, 20% of eight is 1.6 spaces and 50% of eight is four spaces. You are allowed two spaces of Limited Availability because of (FD10.641), which would leave you two spaces of Restricted (you could take up to four spaces of Restricted, but would not have any Limited spaces in that case). So if you took only one of your described type-IV drones, you would have up to one space of Limited and two spaces of Restricted (which includes the one space of Limited) still available for special drones. Now, if you had a cruiser with four type-A drone racks, you would have sixteen spaces, with 3.2 (round to 3) of Limited and eight of Restricted (or five Restricted and three Limited). If your cruiser had two B-racks, you would have ... you get the point.

SFB TACTICS

BEATING THE MAGELLANICS WITH GALACTIC (AND MOST OMEGA) SHIPS

by Ken Burnside

The races of the Lesser Magellanic Cloud have some significant differences in technology from the Alpha and Omega Octants; many of these differences have obvious advantages, such as the flatter damage-over-distance curve of the Magellanic warp-tuned laser system. What many analysts fail to account for are the drawbacks of the ships as whole-integrated systems.

(NOTE: When we begged for more tactics articles, Ken sent this one. The grading panel rejected it, saying it was too much like his previous article on the same subject. Even so, it is worth reading. This article has not been proofread or edited, and so what you get is what Ken wrote. You have been warned.)

WARP-TUNED LASERS AND FIREPOWER BALANCE

While the Magellanic warp-tuned laser system allows significant damage at longer range brackets (including 'no miss' damage at Range 12), the overall damage curve, inside of Range 8, is generally less than the comparable to Alpha sector phasers. A phaser-1 produces more damage per point of energy put in on average (and has a higher peak damage) than a medium warp-tuned laser at every range from eight to zero, other than range six, where the medium warp-tuned laser picks up a point of average damage on it. The closer you get to the Magellanic ship, the better your phaser-1 advantage gets in direct firepower comparisons.

There are secondary advantages and drawbacks for the Magellanic powers. The BANK system makes their warp-tuned lasers vulnerable to hit-and-run raids, and for ships without a lot of 'padding' warp-tuned lasers, can result in all the BANKs being stripped on Mizia volleys, rendering the rest of the warp-tuned lasers moot. On the flip side, the Magellanics start with an early game advantage while they are living off the excess warp-tuned laser capacitance stored in the BANKs.

The two largest drawbacks to Magellanic warp-tuned lasers are defensive: There is no ability to down-fire a Magellanic warp-tuned laser. This can result in over-killing some targets, or spending more power than is desired. The second drawback is that they damage plasma torpedoes at a ratio of three points of damage to a point of warhead reduction rather than a ratio of two points of damage to a point of warhead reduction. Combine this with the lower damage done per weapon, and one point of power into a medium warp-tuned laser will reduce a warhead on a plasma torpedo by roughly one and a half points of warhead strength. Compared to a phaser-1, which will do a minimum of two points of warhead reduction, and can do upwards of four, this is a significant weakness.

Systemically, the balance of firepower on a Magellanic cruiser

is weighted more heavily to their heavy weapons than Alpha Octant ships. While a Magellanic ship with the same overall firing cycle (every turn, every second turn) will be within 10% of the direct firepower of a comparable ship, more of that firepower will come from heavy weapons than from warp-tuned lasers in comparison to Alpha Octant ships.

For example, a Klingon D7 on a perfect Range 4 oblique can expect to inflict roughly twenty-four points of damage from its four disruptors for sixteen points of power, and nearly eighty points of damage from its seven in arc phasers for another seven points of power. The Maghadim battlecruiser, on the other hand, can expect to get twenty-one points of facing shield damage from three overloaded tachyon beams for eighteen points of power, and sixteen points of damage from its eight in arc medium warp-tuned lasers for another eight points of power. The Maghadim battlecruiser will also be getting somewhere between seven and twenty-one points of damage on the opposite facing shield of its target from the tachyon beams, which helps even the score. But in terms of facing shield damage for power put in, the Klingon's firepower costs it twenty-three points of power, while the Maghadim's firepower costs it twenty-six points of power, and those three points of power add up fast.

The dreaded Baduvai strike cruiser can generally expect an optimum range alpha strike to score thirty-three points of damage from its charged particle accelerators (about what four overloaded photons would do), and twelve points of damage from its medium warp-tuned lasers. This is a forty-five point alpha strike, or roughly what a Lyran command cruiser gets at Range 4, using an ubitron interface module.

A Federation command cruiser at Range 8 does comparable damage, and gains significantly in firepower at Range 4. (The Federation command cruiser is slightly likelier to get under twenty points of damage on a Range 8 shot, and much likelier to get more than sixty points of damage.)

The lower power efficiency for Magellanic warp-tuned lasers, and the shift of their firepower split to favoring heavy weapons in general has ripple effects. All of the Magellanic ships are power starved in certain circumstances. The Maghadim, while it has a favorable arming cycle, slows to a crawl if it is arming more than a few warp-tuned lasers while arming its tachyon beams.

The Eneen heavy cruiser, with its high power reactors running at increased output, has forty-two points of power. At the beginning of the game, when the plasma-E torpedoes are held and the BANKs are full, it can cover eighteen hexes per turn while arming all four neutron beams, roughly what a Klingon D7 can do with four overloaded disruptors. Getting all four neutron beams on a target requires a fire/turn/fire, or centerline approach. Both of these commit the Eneen to getting closer, and the first approach may split neutron beam fire over two enemy shields. The Eneen heavy cruiser will score roughly thirty-two points of damage from its neutron beams (with a peak of forty-eight points of damage) and nine points of damage from its medium warp-tuned lasers (with a peak of twelve), assuming a centerline shot at a range of six hexes. A forty-one damage point alpha strike and a near certain guarantee that you will cruise to Range 4 or less may be of use, but most often is not. **PETRICK NOTES THAT THIS IS BEING SOMEWHAT DISENGENUOUS SINCE THE ENEEN SHIP CAN TURN OFF AND LAUNCH A PLASMA-E TORPEDO AFTER FIRING THE ALPHA STRIKE AT RANGE**

SIX, LEAVING IT WITH TWO LIGHT LASERS AND TWO MEDIUM LASERS TO DOWN TYPE-IVF DRONES LAUNCHED BY THE KLINGON D7K, AND THE PLASMA-E HEADING TOWARDS THE KLINGON'S DOWN #1 SHIELD IS GOING TO FORCE HIM TO TURN OFF AS WELL, AND THE ENEEN SHIP STILL HAS ANOTHER PLASMA-E, AND TWO MEDIUM LASERS TO DISCOURAGE PURSUIT WHILE HE GETS READY FOR HIS NEXT ATTACK RUN. AND THE ENEEN CANNOT RELOAD HIS NEUTRON BEAMS ON THE FOLLOWING TURN, GIVING HIM THE POWER TO GO FAIRLY FAST (EVEN AFTER DAMAGE) TO OPEN THE RANGE ON THAT TURN WHILE RECHARGING THE BANK (MAYBE EVEN CONSIDERING STARTING TO RE-ARM THE PLASMA). IF THE OPPONENT DOES NOT PURSUE, THEN THE SECOND PLASMA-E IS READY FOR THE NEXT ATTACK RUN IN ANY CASE AT NO FURTHER ENERGY COST. THE "KEEP AWAY" AFFECT OF THOSE AFT FIRING PLASMA-Fs GOES A LONG WAY TO KEEPING ENEMIES FROM EXPLOITING THE RE-ARM CYCLE WITH A CLOSE PURSUIT OF THE CA, NCL, AND DW. IGNORING THE EFFECTS OF THOSE PLASMA-ES ON THE COMBAT CYCLE MAY FAVOR THE POINT YOU ARE TRYING TO MAKE, BUT DOING SO MASKS THE REALITY THAT THINGS ARE NOT AS WEIGHTED AGAINST THE ENEEN AS YOU ARE SUGGESTING.

A likelier pattern is arming two neutron beams on one side of the ship on a single turn, firing them on the oblique in a volley with the medium warp-tuned lasers, and maneuvering to get the other side in arc for the next turn. Once the Eneen heavy cruiser is refilling the BANK to fire the warp-tuned lasers (roughly seven points of power per turn) and re-arming the plasma-Es torpedoes, it is reduced to covering only thirteen to sixteen hexes per turn. The Eneen war destroyer has similar power issues.

The Baduvai charged particle accelerator-armed ships are capable of moving no more than twenty to twenty-five hexes per turn when arming their charged particle accelerators at all, and the charged particle accelerators cannot start arming from reserve warp power. If you are tracking how many times a Baduvai ship has moved during a turn, you have got a good idea of whether or not he can HET, or is not arming a charged particle accelerator to gain speed.

THE MIGHTY MASS DRIVER

Mass drivers are the secondary weapon of choice in the Lesser Magellanic Cloud, much the same way that drone racks are the secondary weapon of choice among the Western powers of the Alpha Octant. Unlike drones, you have fewer maneuver options to counter them; they hit on the turn they are launched. This means that the usual role of mass driver missiles is as phaser sponges for the Lesser Magellanic Cloud powers. Like drones, they do damage in a volley distinct from direct-fire weapons, and prudent tactics means trying to line them up to hit on the same shield that direct-fire weapons just dropped.

However, do not forget your other options for dealing with them. For two points of power a tractor beam kill one mass driver by holding it until the end of the turn; you can also launch seeking weapons at them (and they cannot be used to target seeking weapons themselves). Often times, the difference between an overwhelming mass driver attack and a manageable one is being able to stop one or two mass drivers. (This goes out the airlock in fleet actions, and against the Maghadim CVA group which can pump out enough mass drivers to blot out the sun.)

Mass drivers are vastly more impacted by electronic warfare than seeking weapons are, and it is possible (with a scout channel) to make them roll twice in a turn for lock-ons. Expanding sphere generators are nearly the perfect defense against mass driver missiles, and nearly every Alpha Octant race has something that they can use defensively against them.

Finally you can use T-bombs - even dummy T-bombs - to complicate the life of any unit that might be launching mass drivers. What makes mass drivers dangerous is when large numbers of them come at once - dribbled and drabbed over several impulses, they are unlikely to hit at all, as the target can turn to bring new phasers to bear, or get more anti-drone drone shots or seeking weapon launches against them. What you want to do, when facing a foe with mass drivers, is think of your T-bomb placement as a pivot point - lay a spread of three T-bombs, or dummy T-bombs or a mix, on a point where any mass drivers launched have no clear path - since they cannot turn - that does not go through the detection radius. He may be forced to launch them one at a time to avoid T-bombs set to count. He may delay his shot entirely to try and clear it. What you need to do is maneuver around that clump of T-bombs to make sure that any shot he gets has to go through them. SPP NOTES: THIS IS AGAIN BEING DISENGENOUS. MOST OF THE DESCRIBED TACTICS ARE NOTHING MORE THAN STANDARD DRONE DEFENSE TACTICS (TURNING TO BRING MORE WEAPONS INTO PLAY, USING TRACTORS TO STOP DRONES FROM IMPACTING) BEING PRESENTED AS IF THEY ARE SOMEHOW NEW AND NEVER BEFORE THOUGHT OF. YOU MAY AS WELL HAVE JUST SAID "STARCASTLE" AGAINST MASS DRIVERS. THE T-BOMB TACTIC IS AT BEST A "DUEL" LEVEL DISCUSSION CALLING FOR THE USE OF "STARCASTLE" (LAY A THIRD OF A CRUISER'S MINES, INCLUDING DUMMIES, AND THEN STAY BEHIND THEM). IT NEGLECTS TO NOTE THAT SENDING ONE MASS-DRIVER MISSILE AT A TIME ADDS UP TO THE COUNT OF THE T-BOMBS, WHICH MEANS THE SHIP HAS TO USE THE OTHER DEFENSES (I.E., IT IS FORCED TO SPEND POWER AND WEAPONS RATHER THAN THE T-BOMBS PROTECTING IT) UNTIL THE SIXTH MASS-DRIVER TRIGGERS THE MINE. WHICH MEANS RATHER THAN STOPPING A SALVO OF SIX, THEY STOP ONE AND THE SHIP IS STILL EMPTYING WEAPONS TO KILL MASS DRIVERS ALLOWING THE MASS DRIVER SHIP TO EMPLOY ITS LASERS AGAINST THE SHIP. USING MASS DRIVERS TO TIE DOWN AN OPPONENT'S PHASERS (OR LASERS) IS NOT ANY DIFFERENT THAN USING DRONES FOR THE EXACT SAME PURPOSE. AGAINST FLEETS, IT IS EVEN WORSE AS THE "ONE MASS DRIVER PER IMPULSE FOR SIX IMPULSES WILL KILL A MINE" AND THEN YOU CAN LAUNCH A MASS OF THEM THROUGH THE GAP AT A TARGET. THE MINES COST FOUR BPV EACH, MASS DRIVER MISSILE COSTS ONE BPV EACH, BUT YOU CAN BUY AS MANY EXTRA MASS DRIVER MISSILES AS YOUR COMMANDER'S OPTIONS ALLOW, A CRUISER CAN ONLY BUY FOUR T-BOMBS. A BADUVAI CA COULD BUY 25 SPARE MASS DRIVERS.

BURNSIDE RESPONSE: Steve, the point here is that many anti-drone tactics work against mass drivers, but they take modification and a consideration of cost-benefit. All of these tricks buy you time. Case in point: These are not quite standard T-bomb tactics for use against drones. With drones, you have the luxury of beaming T-bombs out ahead of you. Against mass drivers, you have to beam them out ahead of time, and then maneuver around them to get maximum benefit; drones can get reactive T-bomb launches, using T-bombs against mass drivers is more like maneuvering around cast web (PETRICK COMMENT: I.E., STARCASTLING). Tractoring a mass driver takes two points of power, but guarantees a kill on that impulse; this is comparable to tractoring a drone to the turn break at range one and killing it with a phaser 1 in total energy expenditure, but the tractor will recycle sooner (and be available sooner) than in the latter case. The flip side is that you are spending two power now, rather than one power now and one power later. Again, there is a cost-benefit decision to be made here, and some are not seeing it. (PETRICK COMMENT: BECAUSE IT IS NOT REALLY THERE.) END BURNSIDE RESPONSE

While this is not a perfect defense, it merely buys you time, while he is circling to clear the T-bombs, you need to be re-arming, repairing, or otherwise engaging him.

Be aware that anything that causes the target of a mass driver salvo to leave the hex it is in prior to the impact of the mass driver missiles causes them to miss.

ALPHA OCTANT DEFENSIVE ADVANTAGES

While the Magellanic shielding system gets a lot of the press and ink on comparisons between the two sets of naval units, with its volley reduction factor, and near immunity to long range plinking, most of these analyses have familiarity blinders. Often overlooked is how much more efficient Alpha Octant shield reinforcement is; one point of specific reinforcement will block one point of damage; two points of general reinforcement will cover a downed shield from boarding party attempts.

Magellanic shielding gets three points of "shield protection" from four points of power on a shield with an even number of boxes. Because the volley reduction factor is revealed any time a weapon impacts the shields, even if it does no damage, it is possible to see which shields are reinforced from very small damage amounts. Magellanic shielding does not allow for general reinforcement, which means that once a pair of shields is down, nothing can stop the hit-and-run raids from coming in until after the turn break.

Now, this is not to say the Magellanics have no advantages. They come with more "first blood" padding than an Alpha Sector ship of comparable pricing, especially on their smaller units. This advantage fades rapidly when the ship size increases. However, the total amount of shield protection (for size class 3 ships on up) is broadly comparable. (A handy rule of thumb for comparing shield strengths is to assume that each box of outer shielding is worth 1.75 Alpha Octant shield boxes; 1.5 for how much damage it will stop, and the extra 0.25 on top to reflect its deterrence potential. Each inner shield is worth one ordinary shield box)

Lastly, remember that the inner shield is more akin to removing armor from a hull than a standard shield; it cannot be reinforced (though it repairs cheaply). While a Magellanic cruiser with a fourteen box outer shield and a twenty box inner shield takes forty-two points of damage before you get to the Damage Allocation Chart, the second shot on the forward shields only has to do twenty-two points of damage before you are on the Damage Allocation Chart. When compared to shooting through two thirty box forward shields on an Alpha Octant cruiser, there is not much difference on overall protection. By the time you have dropped three outer shields, the Galactic cruiser is coming out ahead protection wise, by about six shield box equivalents. SPP NOTES THAT BURNSIDE IS EITHER BEING SLOPPY, OR IS DELIBERATELY CHERRY PICKING SINCE TYPICAL ALPHA OCTANT CRUISERS DO NOT HAVE THIRTY BOX FLANK SHIELDS. FED CAs, CCs, AND NCAs FOR EXAMPLE ALL HAVE 24 BOX FLANK SHIELDS. WHILE SOME CRUISERS DO HAVE 30 BOX FLANK SHIELDS (OR NEAR THAT NUMBER), THEY ARE ONLY TYPICAL IN TERMS OF BEING TYPICAL OF THEIR CLASS AND EMPIRE.

MAXIMIZING ALPHA OCTANT ADVANTAGES AND CAPITALIZING ON MAGELLANIC DISADVANTAGES

There is a certain way to lose against a Magellanic ship: Go in, swap alpha strikes with unreinforced shields, and then give up because they took ten fewer internals than you did. Or because they ripped down one of your shields, and you did not quite drop their inner shield with your first pass. Your first pass is going be trading one of your shields for one of theirs.

With that in mind as your opening strategy, look at the systemic implementation of Magellanic ships as overall systems: You

can both reinforce better than they can (to blunt that original shot), and maintain better speed while re-arming. Even the biggest Magellanic single-ship alpha strike out there is 'brick-able'.

If you are using plasma torpedoes, do not envelop them unless you know they are going to hit for nearly full strength. If you are using hellbores, fire them in direct-fire mode with your phasers to drop a shield; use them in enveloping mode to either strip a lot of outer shielding at once, or to finish off a ship that has lost at least two outer shields. (Hellbores have a threshold effect; since the volley reduction factor comes off prior to the division and finding the weakest shield, it is possible for one hellbore to get 'eaten' by the volley reduction factor. It is also possible for three hellbores to completely remove the outer shielding from an enemy ship.)

If you are using plasmatic pulsar devices, use your plasma launches first to gain an advantaged position; the Magellanics are much likelier to turn off from a plasma torpedo than try to bull through it for the reasons mentioned above. Once they have turned off, use phaser salvos to drop the facing shield, and THEN fire the plasmatic pulsar devices; this is a near perfect inversion of the standard plasmatic pulsar devices doctrine of using them to soften up a target at range.

All of the Magellanic advantages can be countered with a bit of forethought, and understanding what their ships are capable of.

MORE FROM BATTLE GROUP 550 STOP THE JUGGERNAUT!

TROBRIN RAPID RESPONSE

by Paul Stovell, HMS Surrey

FFL *Agate* (88): 2xT-bombs (+8); two extra commando squads (+2), four extra boarding parties (+2) = 100.

FFS *Coral*(90): 1xT-bomb (+4); two extra commando squads (+2), eight extra boarding parties (+4) = 100.

3xFF *Garnet, Malachite, Obsidian* (228): Each 2xT-bombs (+24); five extra boarding parties (+7.5) = 259.5.

FB *Jasper* (84): 1xT-bomb(+4); five extra boarding parties (+2.5) = 90.5.

Like many Omegan empires, the Trobrin used frigate squadrons as reserve forces as they were the fastest units available. By Y183 most empires had switched to newer cruisers which were as fast as the frigates, but the Trobrin particularly continued to use frigates at the start of the Second Great War.

This force has a bolt frigate included, which provides some balance of direct fire and seeking torpedoes. It is also reinforced by the 52nd Marine Light Battalion (the extra boarding parties and commando squads).

Tactics: This Trobrin force has several good points in its favor. It has a good supply of T-bombs to surprise the Juggernaut, and it has big damage dealing weapons in its implosion bolts and implosion torpedoes, and these have good arcs. The good weapons come with a three-turn arming cycle and they are mounted on small ships, which the Juggernaut will have little difficulty mission killing (damaging so badly that they are not able to fight anymore). The basic approach must be to get as much use as possible from the first pass when the force is fully armed. Sadly the Juggernaut is also fully armed so the first pass is going to be bloody.

Energy Allocation: Trobrin ships can move at Speed 27 and hold their torpedoes. This baseline tactic leaves 2.5 points of spare energy for each of the FFs and 3.5 points of spare energy for both the FFL and FB with batteries fully charged. The FFS can either join the attack run or move at a modest speed and apply six points of offensive electronic warfare against the Juggernaut.

The odd half point had best be spent on transporters as T-bombs can prove vital.

You can finesse a little spare power by allocating less to movement and using mid-turn speed changes to reduce speed after the initial pass.

In fact it is vital that your initial speed is not over 26 or you will be unable to perform an HET and a fast-moving Juggernaut might be able to slip past you without coming to point-blank range.

Against this is the danger that the Juggernaut can move 29 hexes, use an HET to get away from you after shooting, and although you can use batteries to cancel any plotted deceleration, the Juggernaut might very well blow the batteries off your ship before you can use them. I would plot the decelerations only for the scout and the bolt frigate, which have more use for extra power and less need of reaching point-blank range respectively. Note if the Juggernaut maintains a high speed all turn, it will struggle to put up a full 100-point shield. It can, just, but this leaves only one point of power in its batteries. Holding a suicide shuttle on each of your ships is a possibility, but I prefer having the power available and using the shuttles as phaser platforms.

The aim is to overrun the Juggernaut on Turn #1 and to get enough damage from this pass to stand a chance of slowing it down. In the long run some ships are going to have to get shots down the rear hexrow while the Juggernaut's shield is distracted by mines or downed by weapons fire to stand a chance of actually stopping the Juggernaut rather than simply delaying it. With the planet at hazard every risk must be taken, and if only delay is possible then delay it must be.

Finessing the attack run: Starting in hex 1015 (as close to the Juggernaut as possible) seems the sensible line to take. I would launch shuttles on Impulses #1 and #3 as, simply put, I doubt they will survive on board the ships and their phasers may be of some help. If the scout is to employ offensive electronic warfare, lend it on Impulse #1 and have each of the other ships generate one point of ECM to force a minimum die roll shift on the Juggernaut's weapons fire. When the Juggernaut is about six hexes away, it is a good time to launch a volley of implosion torpedoes in a bid to get the Juggernaut to turn away. It may be worth using transporters to lay some T-bombs across the likely path of the Juggernaut at this point. This is the first worthwhile point to consider firing. The Trobrin can muster twelve radiation phaser-1s for an average of 42 points of damage and two Implosion bolts will score 36 points if they both hit, for 78 points of damage likely taken on the rotating shield. So it is probably not a good call unless an implosion torpedo or T-bomb has pinned the rotating shield.

Note that if an implosion torpedo hits the rotating shield, then the shield cannot be switched to a different shield facing during the direct-fire stage of the turn. This could prove very useful.

At Range 5 the Juggernaut is at one of its prime firing ranges (the others are Range 3 and below). The Juggernaut can probably blow up two of your frigates, or reduce three of them to hulks, or damage four in a single turn, although about a third of its firepower is in its rear arc. If the Juggernaut allows you to close within Range 5, it is likely that T-bombs can be laid to force the rotating shield away from its susceptible rear hexrow. Whether there will be enough Trobrin firepower left to exploit this is difficult to gauge, but it is the best chance of victory.

Of note when taking damage, implosion torpedoes can be launched up to 16 impulses after the launcher is destroyed. This may well encourage the Juggernaut to fire at the ships carrying the implosion bolts, which do not have this option.

After the first pass: It is likely that, one way or the other, the battle will be decided by the first pass. It is possible that the Juggernaut will lose enough power to be severely affected, or that the Trobrin force will have taken so much damage that it cannot return for a quick kill. Circumstances are too variable to give other than general advice.

The rotating shield may have become a moot issue as the Juggernaut may have to choose between powering it or any weapons. The scout, if untouched, might find offensive electronic warfare very effective now as the Juggernaut may not be able, or willing, to counter it. Also spreading ships out to hunt the rear shield from moderate ranges might be a good call. It may be worthwhile to have the ships use Erratic Maneuvers while they rear their heavy weapons.

Be wary of the Juggernaut's damage control rating of eight. In the two turns the Trobrin are rearming their heavy weapons the Juggernaut could bring four impulse engines back online as auxiliary power reactors, that is enough to power a forty-point rotating shield or enough to fire two phaser-4s and seriously hurt a frigate.

On the other hand do not neglect the very good damage control rating of four which the Trobrin frigates have, as repairing a phaser-1R or a point of power may turn a hulk into something that can snipe at that rear shield.

Good luck if you try this force against the Juggernaut; it should be a brief and excitement-filled game.

FEDERATION LIGHT HORSE

by Jeff Wile, *USS Minnesota*

FFV+ (79/54): Drones: 4xtype-IF (+4); Fighters: 6xF-18B (+54); Drones for fighters: 12xtype-IF (+12), 12xtype-VIF (+6); supplies for fighter: 6xwarp booster packs (+6) = 161/136

FFA+ (94): Drones: 12xtype-IF (+12); Drones for ready racks: 4xtype-IF (+4), 4xtype-VIF (+2) = 112.

FFGa (76): 1xT-bomb (+4); Drones: 4xtype-IF (+4) = 84.
2xPOL+a (98): Each 1xT-bomb (+8); Drones: 4xtype-IF (+8) = 114.

FFS+ (75/59): Drones: 4xtype-IF (+4) = 79/63.

TOTAL BPV: 525 BPV

This is an "ad hoc" group formed out of the regional sector commander's assigned force pool. These "light horses" are the ships that patrol the backwaters of the Federation to deal with the occasional pirate, and tend to be the first responders to any emergency (or the second if the Police stumbled onto the scene and, as they inevitably do, call for backup).

This force brings a mix of phasers-1s, photons, phaser-3s, phaser-Gs, and fighters, not to mention the 26 boarding parties should a ground action or boarding mission be required. It should be noted that all ships are Turn Mode 'B' and the POL+s are Turn Mode 'A' and nimble . . . which makes this force fairly maneuverable (as Federation squadrons go).

This force should be able to handle Kzintis/Klingons, and has a significant anti-PF capability as well.

Uh-oh, nobody told me it was time for a Juggernaut.

Tactics: The Juggernaut is the poster child of Wazoo ship wannabes. It's big, it's fast, and it can move at max speed *and* fire all of its weapons (due to the phaser capacitors) — and therein lies one of its potential weaknesses. Having to recharge its phaser capacitors will cause the Juggernaut to slow down. The trick is to force it to commit against a battle force, and force it to use its phasers for either offense or defense. (It really does not matter which, so long as it expends enough energy. The point is not what it does *this* turn, but the choice you force it to make *next* turn. It will have to choose between powering its weapons or moving at high speed. It won't be able to do both.)

Well, the situation is not hopeless, but it will require a high degree of teamwork for this battle force to succeed against the Juggernaut. None of the ships in this battle group has a prayer of surviving an alpha strike from the Juggernaut, so the trick is going to be luring the Juggernaut into a situation where this battle force can use its drones to kill it.

Phase one: All ships have prepared a scatter-pack for immediate launch prior to the beginning of the scenario. (Note, the FFV+ has enough drones and deck crews to begin loading a second scatter-pack on Impulse #1 of Turn #1.)

The FFG is to generate six points of ECM, and plot Erratic Maneuvers (which costs six points of movement, and could be done with either warp or impulse energy), but not actually using it at start. (The FFG will have to either expend battery power to hold its photons or it will not have the photons loaded to save power.)

The POL+s will also plot Speed 15, pay for Erratic Maneuvers (but not actually use it at the start of the turn), and pay to hold their photons (which could be either standard warheads or overloads).

The FFS+ plots Speed 15, pays for Erratic Maneuvers, and pays for as much ship-generated ECM as it can (likely only two or three points).

These four ships are to spread apart with the FFG leading, and the FFS+ staying within range to lend six points of ECM to the FFG. Preferably, the ships will be up to fifteen hexes from the

FFG, but not all in the same or adjacent hexes.

The FFV+, FFA+, and the F-18Bs (with dash pods) will plot Speed 30, and maneuver to close the range to the Juggernaut at the same rate that the FFG approaches it. (This force is too marginal to attack as separate elements. Everything must be timed to bring all of the firepower we have to bear at the same instant.)

The other four ships of the battle force maneuver (using side-slips and turns) in such a way as to keep the FFG within a range of fifteen hexes, but not get closer to the Juggernaut than the FFG. (The idea is to create a separation between the ships, and then maneuver in such a way that the Juggernaut is between the two forces: the carrier group and its fighters are one force, and the other four ships are the other.) Start launching drones, but spread the launches out through the turn. We need to get the Juggernaut into the habit of killing drones rather than running away, and a few drones will not scare it immediately.)

Phase 2: When the Juggernaut reaches Range 15 from the FFG, that ship will launch its scatter-pack and a drone from the G-rack, and begin Erratic Maneuvers. (At this point, the FFG should have sixteen points of ECM, six points self-generated, six points lent by the FFS, and four points of "natural" ECM as a result of the Erratic Maneuvers.) As it approaches the Juggernaut, the FFG should be following the drones from the scatter-pack, its own drone, and drones launched by the other ships of the battle force. The POL+s and the FFS+ should launch drones from their G-racks during the turn as the situation warrants, but no later than Impulse #25 so as to not delay the chance to launch again on Impulse #1 of the following turn. These other ships may elect to launch their own scatter-packs, but I would wait as long as possible for that. We need to encourage the Juggernaut to get closer, and too many scatter packs would scare it away. Worse, the Juggernaut might be bored and decide to blow them up with long-range phaser-4 shots.) Depending on when the FFG launched its scatter-pack, it might be wise to stagger the scatter-pack launches to no more than one every eight impulses for as long as the force has scatter-packs available. Again, it depends on the situation. So long as Juggernaut closes the range, just keep feeding it a few drones at a time. Built up its self-confidence that drones (and this battle force) are no real threat.

Phase 3: At this point (assuming phases #1 and #2 worked according to plan), the Juggernaut is in the center of a "kill zone". This force has 48 drone channels [54 if using the second special sensor on the FFS+ to control drones plus the two drones per turn from each fighter (one type-I and one type-VI)] for a total of up to sixty drones per turn (assuming no ships are destroyed or currently using Erratic Maneuvers). Since all drones are fast, and given that the Juggernaut is prohibited from using a wild weasel, it becomes a matter of either maneuver (assuming the Juggernaut is moving fast enough to avoid the drones) or firepower (the ability of Juggernaut to kill drones using phasers).

Hopefully, enough drones will kill the Juggernaut, regardless of how it uses its unitary shield. Make no mistake, no matter how effective you are in building a drone wall, you will still have to close the range to the Juggernaut to kill it with phasers, photons, and drones.

I might consider keeping the photons on the POL+s and the FFG armed with proximity fuses in the hope that Juggernaut might turn tail and run (either at the FFV or to escape). That possibility aside, if I get any clear direct-fire shot at its #4 shield arc (assuming that the rotating shield is somewhere else), I will by all means take that shot. It might be the only chance I get to slow it down if it declines to play with my drones! For every ship in *SFB*, power is the currency paid for victory (or survival) and the massive Juggernaut can be sent into bankruptcy by engine damage.

I am prepared to sacrifice the FFG. It is bait, and possibly the only thing that might entice the Juggernaut to use its phaser-4s, and I must get Juggernaut to expend phaser power or it will not slow down enough to where the drones can be effective.

TERMINAL PAPERS

These papers were submitted and graded for *Captain's Log #38*, but were not approved for publication for various reasons as noted at the end of each paper.

IDENTIFY ENEMY ORDNANCE WHEN LAUNCHED

— Ted Fay, *USS Texas*

Normally, you cannot identify a seeking weapon after launch, as lab and scout identification both take place before the seeking weapon stage in the sequence of play. However, probes are your friends. If your opponent uses seeking weapons and you anticipate a knife-fight, then plan ahead by arming a probe in information mode. The reason is that, in the sequence of play, probes launched for information purposes come AFTER plasma launch, multi-warhead (or scatter pack) release, and drone launch. As a result, you can automatically know the target of a seeking weapon, or everything about a drone, even if that weapon is scheduled to hit the very next impulse. This tactic is especially useful in fleet battles where you can have multiple probes armed and can identify multiple targets at once.

This tactic will not work against seeking shuttles timed to hit you on the next impulse, as shuttle launch comes after information probe launch.

There was nothing particularly wrong with this paper, but it was very similar to another paper by the same author and the other paper had a higher score.

FORMATION FLYING

— David Jannke, *USS Texas*

Fighters launching from planetary bases should seriously consider the option of accompanying troop-carrying shuttles in convoy during their turn(s) in atmosphere. While there is a targeting restriction after the convoy breaks up, the convoy rules mandate fire into the convoy from opposing ships must be allocated randomly across the convoy. This can often result in many barely damaged fighters instead of one or two crippled ones.

Comments by grading judges: This has been proposed before and rejected as the movement of troop carrying shuttles has to be for a legitimate reason, i.e., to return to a friendly troopship or to land the troops on a planet or to move troops from one hex of a planet to another hex for purposes of ground combat.

WEDDING CAKE NIGHTMARES

The careful selection of commander's options for a Tholian base under attack can shape the entire course of the scenario. Although the base cannot loan ECCM to itself, if a MRS and sensor drogue are purchased the base can always have 12 ECCM. This means even a scout equipped fleet will be hard pressed to achieve a positive shift and the base's phasers will be at full effectiveness when the opposing fleet enters a web hex.

This paper was rejected because of a rules error (bases can lend EW to themselves). The author was invited to fix the mistake and resubmit it, but the judges felt there might not be enough else in the paper to be publishable.

NOT SO FAST, WEASELBOY

— David Jannke, *USS Texas*

Every once in a while you will end up fighting an opponent who has weaseled close enough to your ship that you can arrive in his hex before your seeking weapons do. In such cases consider using emergency deceleration to arrive in the hex at a speed that leaves you capable of safely tractoring his weasel and pulling it into your shuttle bay. Your direct fire later the same impulse will have no electronic warfare modification and with no lock-on your opponent will be unable to allocate ECCM. Double shuttle bay ships will be even be able to launch a seeking shuttle at the

opponent the same impulse.

As a bonus, in the event you cannot later get rid of the incoming seeking weapons you may have the opportunity to launch your own weasel in a direction that will result in collateral damage on the same shield you just fired on.

Comments by grading judges: You can only do this over a turn break. Rule (J1.620) permits landing enemy shuttles only on Impulse #32. Generally, the idea is to go to Range 0 or 1 (from both the enemy ship and the wild weasel), launch your seeking weapons at the enemy ship, and then eat the weasel on Impulse #32. Your seeking weapons will then hit the enemy ship normally on Impulse #1 (if they are speed 32 or you launched at Range 0). Since shuttle recovery is before launch, however, your opponent will have the chance to launch another WW if he has one. If he does, your seeking weapons will still hit the new WW. This is a serious enough flaw that the tactic is rarely useful. The advantage is that a captured weasel is voided, so there is no four impulse explosion period.

Besides all of the other issues, this can only work if there are no seeking weapons currently targeted at the wild weasel. If there are, then the ship landing the wild weasel becomes the target. It just has such a narrow window of possible use, it seems pointless.

PICKING UP THE SPLIT

— Andy Vancil, *USS Colorado*

You may find yourself firing at a target that is on an ambiguous shield facing that can only be resolved by (D3.43-C3); i.e., the target chooses which shield will be hit. Note that the shield determination is made at the point in the impulse where you ask, and will remain the same for the remainder of the impulse. In this case, you should be sure to make your opponent choose the shield BEFORE you fire. This reduces his tactical flexibility in assigning damage.

Here is an example to illustrate why this is important: Suppose it is Impulse #32, your ship is in hex 0610B, and your opponent is in hex 1410A, showing a #5/#6 split-shield facing. You have four overloaded disruptors to fire. Your opponent's #6 shield has thirty boxes, while his #5 has been reduced to ten boxes.

If you do not ask for the shield facing before firing, your opponent has options. If you roll below average, hitting with only one or two disruptors, he can select the #5 shield, which (with reinforcement from a couple of batteries) absorbs the damage, and leaves the forward shielding intact. If you roll well, he avoids internals by choosing the #6 shield.

If you ask for the shield determination before firing, he must pick a shield without knowing how much damage (if any) you score. While the choice of shields to hit is often obvious, it never hurts to limit your opponent's choices.

Comments by grading judges: This is not the way it works. You fire and then he decides. You do not get to ask at the start of each impulse what shield he will take the damage on. The rule says (D3.43): "If no other means of resolution is possible, use one of these methods to apply the damage." While the target is making a determination, he makes it in response to the damage, not in response to a question.

DISCOUNT DIPSY DOODLE

— William Wilson, *USS Washington*

The "dipsy doodle" tactic, where you gain a hex of movement by decelerating by one for part of the turn, is well-known. But it can also be combined with unplotted speed changes to gain a free hex of movement under the "cap rule," (C12.24).

(For clarity, a basic dipsy doodle might be: Impulses #1-7 at speed 10 (two moves), Impulses #8-15 at speed 9 (three moves), Impulses #16-32 at speed 10 (six moves), a total eleven moves with a maximum speed of 10.)

Consider the following speed plot (assume for simplicity a

movement cost one ship that had a speed of at least seven on the previous turn):

Speed 12 from Impulse #1 through Impulse #9

Speed 17 from Impulse #10 through Impulse #17

Speed 16 from Impulse #18 through Impulse #26 (this is the dipsy doodle)

Speed 17 from Impulse #27 through Impulse #32

This plot covers 17 hexes and thus would normally cost 17, and would be a reasonable speed plot for a ship with turn mode of D, but the effect can be employed at lower speeds and, with sufficient reserve warp engine power, at higher speeds as well.

Now consider a speed plot of 10 through the entire turn, which obviously would cost ten points of power in Energy Allocation. Instead, make an unplotted acceleration on Impulse #9 to the same 17-16-17 plot as in the previous example. This gains five hexes relative to the previous plot.

However, the calculation of the cap rule is based on continuing the new higher speed until the end of the turn. In this case, the higher speed would be 17. Speed 17 gains four hexes relative to speed 12 from impulses 10-32, resulting in a cost, under the "cap rule," of four.

Comments by grading judges:

• *He forgets that plotted deceleration to sixteen when talking about an unplotted change from speed ten. (Paragraph starting with 'Now consider . . .')*

• *I cannot find anything that makes this illegal, but it is such a nit picking idea certainly not within the spirit of the SFB rules that I do not like it.*

• *I have always refused to use tactics like this (which could be one of the many reasons I sucked at the few times I tried tournaments). So, I do not believe I am qualified to judge them.*

• *His computations are incorrect. Each speed change is computed (with separate caps) independently, even though they happen to be plotted at the same instant.*

DIPSY DOODLE DANDY

— Rank William Wilson, *USS Washington*

Suppose you are planning to start a turn at medium speed, but want to make your attack run at high speed, slowing again afterward (do not try this against a plasma ship!). However, you do not know exactly when in the turn your attack will be. Plotting a dipsy doodle later in the turn can "store" a hex of movement, reducing the cost of making unplotted adjustments to your speed.

Consider the following speed plot:

Speed 16 from Impulse #1 to Impulse #9

Speed 31 from Impulse #10 through Impulse #17 (the attack run)

Speed 16 from Impulse #18 through Impulse #26

Speed 17 from Impulse #27 through Impulse #32.

Unfortunately, your opponent does not cooperate and messes up your timing. Suppose you realize you will be forced to engage on Impulse #8 instead. Then on Impulse #6 you could do an unplotted acceleration, rewriting your speed plot as follows:

Speed 16 from Impulse #1 to Impulse #6 (completed)

Speed 31 from Impulse #7 through Impulse #17

Speed 17 from Impulse #18 through Impulse #32.

This gains two hexes of movement in the short term (and three precious impulses of high speed), but because it consumes the extra hex of movement "stored" later in the dipsy doodle, it actually only gains one hex over the course of the turn compared to the previous speed plot. Thus you can make this change for a cost of two points of reserve power, including the penalty.

You can prolong your high-speed burst the same way. Suppose you are chasing your opponent using your high speed burst, but on Impulse #17, you realize you are not going to catch him. Rewrite your speed plot as follows:

Speed 16 from Impulse #1 to Impulse #9 (completed)

Speed 31 from Impulse #10 to Impulse #21

Speed 17 from Impulse #22 through Impulse #32.

Again, you have gained two hexes in the short term (and four impulses of high speed), but the actual difference in hexes moved over the turn is only one. Thus, again, the cost is only two points of reserve power, even with the penalty.

Comments by grading judges:

• *It is not legal.*

• *Such a nit picking idea certainly not within the spirit of the SFB rules that I do not like it.*

• *His computations are still incorrect. He is correct that the "stored" movement from later in the turn will make his early speed change cheaper, but the second speed change (which eliminates the "stored" movement) will fall under the "not less than one hex of movement energy" clause in (C12.24).*

THAT WAS NOT SUPPOSED TO HAPPEN

Suppose you have been tractorred, and have a suicide shuttle available to launch. However, the combined speed of the two ships is fast enough that a suicide shuttle would be death-dragged before it could hit - but under the Net Effective Vector rule, it would NOT be death-dragged if the ships were facing opposite directions (that is, the higher pseudo-speed is at most 12 more than the lower, which is true in almost all cases).

If you have an HET available, you might be able to trick your opponent into letting the suicide shuttle hit. Launch the shuttle at a speed and on an impulse where the following are true:

* The shuttle moves next impulse, AND EITHER

* Your opponent moves next impulse and you do not, OR

* You move next impulse, but your turn mode is not satisfied, OR

* You move next impulse, but you are facing the same direction as your opponent, so turning will not change the net effective vector speed.

The absolute optimum launch condition would be where on the next impulse, you do not move, but your opponent's turn mode is not satisfied.

Your opponent will size up the situation and realize that the shuttle will be death dragged before it can hit. He will probably assume you have made a mistake, and ignore the shuttle, saving his phasers for you.

On the next impulse, however, you HET to face the opposite direction compared to your attacker (which ships can do even on impulses where they are not scheduled to move). The HET instantaneously changes the net effective vector speed, and the shuttle will not be death-dragged. Your opponent has no opportunity to react and will be hit by the suicide shuttle.

The only defenses against this tactic are to always destroy all seeking shuttles, or to counter-HET to face away from you. If the opponent does the first, at least the shuttle distracted some phasers, and in this case you do not need to use your HET. If he does the second, you have surely ruined his attack.

Comments by grading judges:

• *Rule (G7.36-c) states this Net Effective Vector only applies if BOTH ships are moving on the given impulse, so William Wilson's argument falls through.*

• *The key to this paper seems to be that the combined effective speeds of both ships now in TRAC must be less than 12, that limits this tactic from the start.*

The Department of Strategic Studies

TACTLESS NOTES

WHERE TO PUT YOUR PRIME TEAM?

— *Mike Curtis, USS Tennessee*

Prime teams doing either commando or capture missions need to be on a specific ship in the main battle line. The question is where to place them. If you put them on your largest warship in the battle line then the enemy will direct on it bagging both your biggest warship in the battle line and the Prime Team also.

An example is a Lyran force with a dreadnought commanding and a couple of battlecruisers and heavy cruiser in the battle line with a battlegroup of three war cruisers, two war destroyers, all supported by a war destroyer scout. Do not put the Prime Team on a battlecruiser or heavy cruiser as they are prime targets for directed damage. Put them on one of the war cruisers as those ships are not prime targets for directed damage, but have enough strength that if your enemy wants to bag the Prime Team he will have to spend twenty-two damage points doing so. You will just be out a war cruiser instead of a heavy cruiser or battlecruiser.

This concept works the same for the other empires also.

There was nothing wrong with this paper and it got a passing grade, but the paper duplicated one submitted by another author and was withdrawn by Mister Curtis.

DESTRUCTION OF THE LIGHT BRIGADES

— *Rank Edward Kroeten, USS California*

Often the strikes into the Kzinti capital either on Turn #2 or Turn #3 can be predictable, the Klingons (with some Lyran support) strike at the Kzinti capital to reduce the Kzinti economy. The Kzinti player knows that the Coalition cannot capture the capital hex and is just coming in to devastate the economy. Conventional Kzinti tactics are to spread out the static fleet so they can inflict as much damage as possible to the Coalition. To take advantage of this the Coalition should go directly to Kzintai Major, ignore the starbase, and destroy the brigades that are there, but not devastate the planet.

Why do this? Because this will cause the Kzinti's no end of problems. Also this will reduce the number of casualties that the Coalition has to take in the long run. On Turn #2 the maximum number of brigades on the capital planet is three and on Turn #3 it is four. The Coalition should be able to destroy them in five or six combat rounds if there are two maulers in the fleet that goes into the capital hex on Turn #2. If the Kzintis have deployed aggressively it may take seven or eight rounds to destroy the brigades on Turn #3 (more likely).

The destruction of the planetary defense unit (PDUs) brigades at Kzintai Major gives the Kzintis four choices, all of which are bad for them and the Alliance as a whole.

One, the Kzintis can build up one of the other major planets in a different system. This will cause the Kzintis to split their static forces between two separate systems, reducing their staying power, because they will be defending two hard points instead of one.

Two, upgrade the minor planet at Kzintai. This keeps all the static forces in the same system as the starbase, but the starbase will not be able to add its combat potential to the minor planet.

Three, try to rebuild the planetary defense units on Kzintai Major. This is one of the more likely scenarios, so we will discuss three options.

First if the Kzintis build four planetary defense units, the Coalition should definitely go back and devastate Kzintai Major.

Second, if the Kzintis put a planetary ground base on Kzintai Major, then the decision is based on how badly the Coalition fleet is shot up. The Coalition will be back at the capital but they will be shooting up the other three systems. So the question is if the Coalition wants extra rounds in front of the starbase. The capital planet is still weak as it takes a full turn for the planetary defense units to activate.

Third, do not upgrade. This is probably the most likely option. The Kzintis decide that upgrading the capital is now a lost cause. This is probably true because now there are no planetary defense units to support the starbase, which is the key to the capital's defense. Thus without the planetary defense unit brigades the capital will fall that much easier.

Now you may be asking yourself how this helps the Coalition in the long run. Well here are a couple benefits.

First, the Coalition will not have to face the maximum number of brigades at the capital, which is the key. A Turn #3 assault could save 186 damage points versus a Turn #4 assault. This assumes on Turn #4 the Kzintis have a combat potential of 350 points at the capital; five brigades plus a starbase equals 228 points plus a 120+ point fleet, one round to take down a brigade and then one more round to burn off the minus points. This will result in the Coalition taking substantially fewer losses keeping their ship count higher which will be magnified later as it is early in the war.

Next, the final capital assault now breaks down into a few small planetary battles and one starbase assault without any additional support units. Giving the Coalition the option to defeat the fleet (preferred) or use the starbase incremental damage system. Defeating the fleet will reduce the necessity for a large garrison fleet, freeing ships to fight on other fronts. This tactic can also be used against the Hydrans to defeat their fleet.

So just like in the movies go ahead and charge straight on to the capital and see the destruction of the light brigades. Do not fail to miss it.

Comments by grading judges:

- *Ineffective and not really a good tactic.*

- *The original notion, attacking the home system first, is sound, but the conclusions are completely wrong, and not supportable. It also does not take into account the Coalition's long term goals. If the goals are to take the Kzinti capital, then it MIGHT be an okay start. But if the goal is Hydrans first, then this tactic will lead to a huge pile of Coalition cripples and dead for little result. It also makes incorrect assumptions about what the Kzinti player can or might do. If anyone used this against me, I would stomp them into powder.*

- *This only works if the Kzinti player spreads most of his static forces away from Kzintai; most Kzinti players generally use their mobile force for the off-system protection*

NOT JUST FOR MAULERS ANY MORE

— *Rank Edward Kroeten, USS California*

Alliance players for years have tried to convince Coalition players that they should only use directed damage with a mauler,

otherwise the coalition is using an inferior method of damage. The argument goes something like this; that directed damage is only 50 percent as effective as letting the damage fall (non-directed damage), so the coalition is just wasting its firepower. This is specious reasoning for several reasons.

First the number of attrition units (fighters) that the alliance fields, now this varies from fleet to fleet, and is higher for the western powers (Hydrans and Kzintis). These units are lost for no permanent damage to their respective fleets. The fighters can be easily replaced from second line carriers and fast carrier re-supply ships. Most players would say a conservative estimate would be that at least 25% of all non-directed damage falls on the fighters. Thus already non-directed damage goes from 100% effective to 75% effective in creating permanent damage to the alliance fleet.

Next, for the moment we will assume that both directed damage attacks and non-directed damage will result in an equal number of ship casualties. Now this is a patently false statement, which we will discuss later. With non-directed damage, each ship casualty that the coalition thought they had destroyed has a 16.6% chance of not being destroyed. "What!?! " you say. This is exactly what depot level repair (424.0) allows for no economic cost; admittedly it takes a few turns to get the ship back. So this drops the effective damage of non-directed damage from 75% to 58.34%; which is close enough to the effective damage of a directed damage attack (50 percent) for some to say that directed damage is the better option. After all with a directed damage attack the attacker gets to choose the target. However, for the doubtful, there are other considerations to be taken into account.

Rescue tugs (537.2) can save a ship that was destroyed by a non-directed damage attack, thus further reducing the effective damage of non-directed damage versus a directed damage attack. As rescue tugs can only be used once per battle hex a good estimate of the reduction would be 3-4%, so now non-directed damage is at 55% effective damage (58.34-3.34=55).

One more thing that has bearing on the effective damage of a non-directed damage attack versus directed damage attack is rapid combat repair (425.3) as many battles take place over alliance bases. With rapid combat repair a ship that might have been destroyed to resolve damage can now just be crippled, the excess damage is used to cripple some other ship that can be repaired by the base or fleet repair dock saving another ship from destruction. A safe assumption would be at least 5% of any potential ship casualties can be saved using this method. Taking this into account non-directed damage is either the same or worse than directed damage in causing permanent damage to the alliance fleet.

One of the things I have mentioned is that with directed damage the coalition gets to choose the ship that is destroyed, not the alliance player. [So the Hydran and Gorn cruisers and better alliance ships become casualties as opposed to war destroyers; with the exception of the outside escorts when the coalition has to use carrier escort damage step (CEDS).] Also as I mentioned earlier, every round that directed damage is used should result in an alliance ship being destroyed, this will not only benefit the coalition by reducing the alliance ship count, but will provide more opportunities for capturing ships resulting in an increase in the coalition economy or their ship counts.

So when do you use directed damage?

Some examples are in any battle where the alliance is only going to stay one round (pin battles), when the alliance is going to perform a strike mission (three to four combat rounds) to destroy a key unit (special attack forces or a supply point) or an open space battle where you can afford a longer battle (attrition).

Where should you not use directed damage?

Examples would include a close battle where you need to win the hex as directed damage will extend the battle or at a fortified location (starbase or capital battle) where the coalition

will have a severe combat potential disadvantage. Also if you do not have the numerical superiority to take the cripples and still put up a good line then directed damage should not be used.

Obviously this is general advice. If the tactical or strategic goals require a non-directed damage attack use non-directed damage.

In conclusion, overall directed damage attacks are equally as effective if not more effective in terms of permanent damage done than non-directed damage attacks. This is because directed damage is not affected by fighters (they become minus points if you do not have enough extra damage points), depot level repair, rescue tugs, or rapid combat repair. Also directed damage will result in increased opportunities to capture alliance ships.

Comments by grading judges:

- *Improper statistical calculations (should be figuring off of a chance of failure, not success), general knowledge.*

- *Too long.*

- *Covers the same ground as "Be Direct Sometimes" but does not do as good a job.*

1,001 THINGS ABOUT TUGS IN THE BATTLE LINE

— *Michael Parker, USS Texas*

1,001 things about sending a battletug up to the front lines to absorb damage that you always wanted to know but were afraid to ask! Or actually any TUG+POD combination that adds defense to the tug for that matter!

After playing *Federation & Empire* a few times, we quickly come to realize the importance of taking damage in an economical fashion.

Tugs are a very important resource not to be squandered lightly, so when using this tactic you need to assure yourself you will win the battle, or at least avoid pursuit, as well as be able to repair the tug for operations on the following turn. It is very expensive if you fail in this and get a tug and battle pod(s)/pallet killed.

But if you are in a winning battle, crippling a battle tug is a very economical method of taking damage. Typically a battletug ends up with four more defensive factors than the standard tug. So you can resolve twelve damage by crippling the battle tug, and then next turn re-assign the pods legally leaving you a tug that needs only four repair points. So you spend two economic points to resolve twelve points of damage, a *very* favorable ratio of .1667 economic points to one damage point, one of the best possible actually. In fact the only other unit that repairs so well is the Federation escort light cruiser.

There are other tug and pod combinations you can get benefit from. The Federation light tactical transport with a heavy battle pod, for example, is nice. It resolves eleven points of damage and repairs for 1.5 economic points, for .1364 economic points to one damage point, the *best* ratio of all. It is, however, even riskier to use since it is an overloaded tug and so must be committed with care! Although you are risking a war cruiser based tug instead of heavy cruiser based tug, you are still risking a valuable battle pod. I will leave it as an exercise to the reader to find other favorable tug and pod combinations.

Comments by grading judges:

- *This is a repeat of: "Battletug Damage Sponge", Captain's Log #25, by Chris Fant.*

- *Again, one of the obvious uses of pods (this time)*

- *Reassigning the pods is not necessary, but battle tugs are good late round casualties, especially at/near repair yards.*

- *Crippled tugs are too easily killed in a pursuit battle.*

SHIPYARD REPORT

(R2.A29) DREADNOUGHT HEAVY CARRIER (DVA): We did not include an "escort table" for this ship since the data was obvious as we lacked the space. Here it is, for those who want it.

Year	Escorts	Fighters
Y179-182	NAC, 2 x DWA, or NAC, DWA, FFA	6 x A-20F and 12 x F-14A
Y183-189	NAC, DWA, FFA	6 x A-20F and 12 x F-14B
Y190-Y194	2 x NAC, 1 x FFA	6 x A-20F and 12 x F-14C
Y195+	2 x NAC, 1 x FFA	6 x A-20F and 12 x F-14D

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CONTINUED!

The text below concludes articles in other sections.

Continued from X1R after Action Report

"converting" in "The cost converting a drone".

(Z39.2) Jon Berry is misspelled John Berry, Mischa Chad Robuliak is misspelled Roubialk.

(Z39.4) TEXT: First paragraph, delete the word "over" from "and suggested over more for".

Annex #10 - The Federation GSX should be in the GS group.

Changes to the Advanced Technology Rules Since Module X1 Was Published, (XFD10.1): The word "is" in "type-VIII is drone" should be deleted.

Changes to the Advanced Technology Rules Since Module X1 Was Published, (XFD10.2): The word "is" in "type-VIII is drone" should be deleted.

Notes: continued from page 6...

TONY THOMAS

Sculptor, Playtester.

His signature front is Comic Sans MS, smooth and flowing.

After issues with the Orion DN, I did a new version that should work much better for casting. I replaced the existing wing structure with a completely new section fabricated from 1/8" brass stock. New sensor pads (cut from two sacrificial Orion ships – they must have been from some other Cartel!) were added. New tractor emitters and option mounts were created from "green-stuff" and added. The correct number of phaser bumps have been added to the nose, the wings, and the RS/LS of the hull.

I have to admit, I used to get upset when John Schneder caused a delay in the release of a mini I couldn't wait for – but after working on the monitor, the Gendarme, and the Orion DN; I can see how doing something like this can take some time.

It's been a learning process, but I think I've about figured out what parts cause me the most delays (and consequently... how to work around them) and should be able to produce better quality minis on a better schedule. I've got the basics for the Juggernaut worked out and will most likely begin assembling it soon. I intend to get it done rather quickly and sent to you soon. I expect to have it come back at least once and you asking for more detail... or different details...

Thanks again for providing my game of choice (and allowing me the opportunity to help out).