



STARLETTER #69

The Official *Star Fleet Battles* Newsletter

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**TASK
FORCE
GAMES™**

DOOMSDAY MARCHES ON

While the Captain's Rulebook hasn't made it to the stores yet, we are getting closer. As these words are written (16 Jan 90), the "Revised Staff Draft" is complete. This was the draft that was printed in Basic Set. To eliminate the final few typos and contradictions that crept into Basic Set, we are running Advanced Missions, Module C1, and Module C2 through the review mill one last time. We expect to have the Captain's Rulebook at the printers late in January or early in February. You can rest assured that when it *does* get to the stores, it *will* be what you have waited so many years for, and well worth waiting for.

SCANNERS REPORT

Some of the products currently being worked on.

- ★ CAPTAIN'S LOG #9: Hope to have this out by Origins.
- ★ DOOMSDAY: Advanced Missions in March, C1 and C2 in April-May; J, K, R1-R4 sometime after that. Subject to update.
- ★ MODULE T: The revised tournament book. Sometime in 1991? Counters, "convention scenarios," etc.
- ★ MODULE S1: The best of the Nexus and Log scenarios, and a few from other Commander's products. Late in 1991?

TASK FORCE NEWS

☉ Due to the overwhelming success of our last counter sheet special, Task Force Games is now offering a bundle of nine different sheets for only \$4.50! You will receive SFB Volume II Sheets #1, #2, and #3; SFB Volume III Sheets #1 and #2; and Reinforcements #1 Sheets #1, #2, #3, and #4.

☉ Task Force Games is also having a "battle damage" sale of maps, rulebooks, and assorted other game components. If you are interested, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to TFG for a price list. Example: Buy a Basic Set rulebook with a soiled cover (but otherwise ok) for only \$10 (half price!) +\$2 P&H.

FROM AMARILLO DESIGN

You asked what you could do to help...

★ FIGHTER POD PROJECT: We are currently considering plans to include a "fighter pod" rule in Module J. These pods would be loaded and carried like EW pods, but would have a variety of uses, such as increased drone control, scientific research, shields, and one-shot phasers. If you have any ideas for similar pods, send them in; it's possible that *your* idea isn't on the list for consideration yet. Several people have sent similar lists to us in the past; we have some of them on file but do not seem to have some others that "the Steves" can remember replying to, so even if you sent them before (and even if we said NO WAY), send them again! You could get lucky.

★ TACTICS MANUAL: The Tactics Manual is being revised to go along with the new Doomsday rules. If you know of any mistakes or other problems in the old version, drop us a line and let us know so we can correct these items in the new printing.

NEW SHIP NAMES

We're always assigning new ship name as we need them in scenarios or use them to honor various people. We decided to add a list of the new names assigned to Starletter so you could keep up with them.

FEDERATION: CL-914 *Oklahoma*.

NCA Names: 1651 Chicago, 1652 New York, 1653 Dayton, 1654 Los Angeles, 1655 London, 1656 Tokyo, 1657 Beijing, 1658 Berlin, 1659 Mecca, 1660 Buenos Aires, 1661 Kinshasa.

WYN: AxC *Mary Katherine*, AxC *Charice*.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

On a space-available basis, Starletter will announce events of interest to SFB players, including conventions, local tournaments, PBM campaigns, club meetings, special store events, etc. ADB and TFG make no warranty as to the quality, reliability, or reputation of any item announced. Send your announcements to Amarillo Design Bureau, PO Box 8759, Amarillo, TX 79114. Please get them in as early as possible.

Readers should include a stamped self-addressed envelope when requesting information from listed events.

➤ ORIGINS 91: 4-7 July 1991, Baltimore (Md) Convention Center. National Wargaming Convention, hundreds of events, thousands of players, 200 dealer booths. National SFB Championships are scheduled for this convention. Info from PO Box 609, Randallstown MD 21133.

➤ PRAIRIE CON 13: 8-10 Feb 81, Brandon MB Canada. Info from P O Box 1731, Brandon MB, Canada, R7A 6J3.

➤ SADDAMCON I: Sometime in December, somewhere in Saudi Arabia, HQ of 1st Cavalry Division (SFC M S Cocherl).

➤ WARP SPEED: 2 March, Australia. Info from Garry T L Koellen, Unit 24, 53-55 Elizabeth Bay Road, Elizabeth Bay 2011.

➤ LEHICON IV: 15-17 March 91, Allentown PA. SFB Patrol tourney. Info Mike Griffith, Box 1864, Bethlehem PA 18016. TFG gift certificates as prizes. Also, SFB beginner's tournament.

➤ I-CON X: 19-21 April 91, SUNY Stony Brook, Long Island. Info: SUNY Stony Brook, Union Room 258, Stony Brook NY 11794. SFB Patrol tourney (TFG gift certificates); beginners also.

➤ POINT CON XIV: 5-7 April 91, USMA West Point. Info: Cadet D John Morgan, Box 3857, West Point NY 10997. SFB Patrol tourney (TFG gift certificates); beginners also.

NEW SHIP FOR STAR FLEET BATTLES

(R0.6A) The NCAs (most races will get one in Module R5) are based on war cruiser hulls, but have been drastically increased in size and power to create the equivalent of a heavy cruiser. These ships appeared in the late war years when CAs had been replaced on the building ways by CHs and CBs (also in Module R5) and the supply of CA hulls was dwindling rapidly. We have most of these designs on file and are not considering submissions. (The Klingon D5W, Lyran NCA, and Kzinti NCA are on GENIE. The Gorn CM and Romulan FH are NCAs. Not all NCAs are created equal in combat power.)

(R2.946) **FEDERATION NEW HEAVY CRUISER (NCA):** Faced with a shortage of heavy cruiser hulls, the Federation (like many other races) looked to its war cruiser design and created a "new heavy cruiser" that could be assembled in shipyards that were building NCLs (leaving the CA shipyards free to build CBs). The addition of the rear hull and the small center engine (taken from a frigate) increased power, versatility, and range. Can drop the rear hull and center engine; if so, the ship has a move cost of 2/3 but keeps the turn mode and b/d of the NCA. Spare shuttles: 2.

Variants: None are planned (we have them on file, no submissions will be considered). Existing NCL variants are adequate for all tasks except direct combat, and the limited number of NCAs would be needed to improve battle force density.

F&E: See article on next page.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

SCENARIO: SP275 Passing the Football.

NEW SHIP: Federation New Heavy Cruiser *Chicago*.

FOR F&E: New Heavy Cruisers for Everyone! (Almost)

NEW SCENARIO FOR STAR FLEET BATTLES

(SP275.0) PASSING THE FOOTBALL

(Y179) *by Targis Ketrick, Klinshai*

In Y179 the Federation began a series of raids to disrupt the Klingon logistic structure in preparation for their own offensive. In one of these raids, the Federation NCA *Dayton* caught the *Commissar Tomak Vilkov* and the *Respite* just as they were transferring cargo pods. (This was a standard procedure used by all races, allowing the more easily replaced but shorter ranged LTT to supply units in the combat zone while protecting the longer-ranged and harder to replace tug.) The criticality of the supplies these pods contained made the resulting battle one of extreme desperation.

(SP275.1) **NUMBER OF PLAYERS:** 2; Federation, Klingon.

(SP275.2) INITIAL SET-UP

FEDERATION: NCA+ *Dayton*, Captain Ralph McBryde, in 0101, heading C, speed max, WS-III.

KLINGON: Tug-B *Commissar Tomak Vilkov* [one cargo pod attached, not on the centerline (G14.43)], in 2015, heading E, speed 5, WS-I.

D5H *Respite* (one cargo pod attached) in 0730, heading B, speed 10, WS-I.

One cargo pod in 2215, facing F, speed 0.

(SP275.3) **LENGTH OF SCENARIO:** The scenario continues until all forces belonging to one side have been destroyed, captured, or have disengaged.

(SP275.4) SPECIAL RULES

(SP275.41) **MAP:** Use a floating map.

(SP275.42) **SHUTTLES AND PFs:** No warp booster packs.

(SP275.421) **MRS:** The NCA may have an MRS shuttle if using that rule.

(SP275.43) **COMMANDER'S OPTION ITEMS:** The following are provided in lieu of the 20% in (S3.2).

(SP275.431) Each ship has its normal complement of T-bombs and dummy T-bombs. The NCA has an MRS shuttle if players are using that rule.

(SP275.432) All drones are "medium;" speed-20.

Each drone-armed ship can have special drones up to the historical racial percentages.

(SP275.44) **REFITS:** All ships in this scenario have received all applicable refits available at the specified date.

(SP275.45) The cargo pod on the D5H is empty and has no victory value in this scenario. The other two pods are full.

(SP275.5) **VICTORY CONDITIONS:** Each player earns one of the seven levels of victory (Strategic, Tactical, Marginal victory; draw; Marginal, Tactical, Strategic defeat) independently of the other. Comparing levels of victory determines the overall winner. If both achieve the same level, the scenario is effectively a draw.

KLINGON

Disengage with both (full) pods: Strategic Victory.

Disengage with one (full) pod: Marginal Victory.

No (full) pods are saved: Draw.

If the Tug-B is destroyed: Reduce victory two levels.

If the D5H is destroyed: Reduce victory one level.

If the empty pod is destroyed: So what?

FEDERATION

If both (full) pods are destroyed: Tactical Victory.

If one (full) pod is destroyed: Marginal Victory.

If no (full) pods are destroyed: Draw.

Destruction of each Klingon ship: Increase one level.

Federation ship is crippled: Reduce victory one level.

Federation ship is destroyed: Reduce two victory levels.

(SP275.6) **VARIATIONS:** The scenario can be played again under different conditions by making one or more of the following changes:

(SP275.61) Reverse the roles using a Federation Tug and LTT versus a Klingon D7K or D5W.

(SP275.62) Terrain features are frequently used as a location to establish supply drops. Assume that this supply drop is being done in an asteroid field using the map in Module B or the rules in (P3.1).

(SP275.63) Use only the Tug-B and its two pods on the Klingon side. Replace the Fed NCA with a DW or FFB.

(SP275.64) Replace the NCA with an FFV (6xF-18) and an FFA.

(SP275.7) **BALANCE:** The scenario can be balanced between players of different skill levels by one or more of the following:

(SP275.71) Change one or more of the cargo pods to self-defense pods.

(SP275.72) Replace the NCA with a BC or an NCL, or replace the Tug-B with a Tug-AK.

(SP275.73) Add one or two E-3s, G-2s, or G-1s to the Klingon force within three hexes of the Tug-B.

(SP275.8) TACTICS

FEDERATION: Looks like it might be simple to kill the loose pod, but you have to disable the Tug-B first. Have some power available to tractor the loose pod and keep it away from the Klingons, or stop them from towing it off. Send the Marines to destroy his tractor beams to prevent him from docking pods.

KLINGON: Where the heck did that Fed come from? The whole situation is a mess. The D5H's pod has no value, but if you drop it at any speed faster than one, you will damage the D5H (G14.32). But you have to get rid of it in order to grab the other pod. The empty pod also is padding for the D5H in battle with the NCA. Hard choice here. The Tug-B cannot disengage by acceleration unless it drops the pod it currently has (G14.431). In order to undock to it and redock to it, the Tug-B has to go speed 0 (G14.41), and in order to attach the other pod, you have to do a 360° turn and slow to speed 0 because you cannot dock it if it is not facing the same direction as your tug (G14.42). All you wanted to do was let the D5H take the pod you dropped and grab the empty from him. Now, your best bet may be to tractor the pod and try to get away far enough to attach it. The pod will slow your movement while towed by tractor and not docked, and the Fed may tractor it to break your tractor. Looks like the best bet will be to send the D5H to delay the NCA while you dock the Tug-B to the pod and run.

FEDERATION & EMPIRE

Given the publication (in this Starletter) of the first of the new NCA class, we thought perhaps you would like to have a few others to experiment with. NCAs can replace one CW per turn on the production schedule (except for the Romulans, who are already doing that). One can be overbuilt each turn. Conversions are limited to 3 per turn. The factors are subject to adjustment as the SFB versions of the ships continue through playtest. All have a command rating of 8. All cost 6 points to build.

Race	Ship	CF	Conversions.....	Cost
Fed	NCA	8	From NCL.....	3 points
Klingon	D5W	8	From D5.....	3 points
Kzinti	NCA	8	From CM.....	3 points
Hydran	MH	6-9-(3)	From HR.....	3 points
Hydran	IRQ	8	From TR.....	3 points
Lyrans	NCA	8	From CW.....	3 points

Note: The Gorn CM and Rom FH aren't NCAs for this purpose.

PLAYTEST REPORT FORMAT

We encourage all SFB players to submit reports on new ships and scenarios. *We can't print new products without playtest reports.* Anyone can playtest; your first assignment is in this very issue! For your report to be used, it must be typed or computer printed on 8.5x11 paper. Each rule, ship, and/or scenario report must be on a separate page. Put your name, address, and a list of playtesters on every page.

If you include a stamped self-addressed envelope, we'll send you another assignment, or we'll tell you what needs to be improved in your report before you can do another one. More assignments are available on GENie; you can report via Email.

All reports should be sent to Amarillo Design Bureau, Post Office Box 8759, Amarillo, TX 79114 (or to ADB\$ on GENie).

REPORTS ON SHIPS

1. List the Race, Class, and Project (900) number.
2. What mission is the ship intended for? Is it suitable? Why?
3. How many times did you test the ship in one-on-one duels? What ships did you test it against? What were the results?
4. How many times did you test it in fleet battles? Describe the fleets and results. Did the ship perform its mission?
5. Are there any hidden flaws? Are power, speed, and systems adequate to the mission?
6. Is the ship recommended for publication?

REPORTS ON SCENARIOS

1. List the title and the SP number.
2. How many times did you play it? How many to completion? We require at least two playings and prefer more.
3. Is the scenario unbalanced? If so, toward whom? How much?
4. Pick one: Fun, boring, one of the best, unworkable, average.
5. Is there a "trick key" that can unlock the scenario and cause it to fall apart? If so, describe it and how you solved it.
6. List any proposed changes, variants, or balance factors.
7. Assign Priority for publication: Immediately, soon, whenever, never, in a particular product.

REPORTS ON RULES

1. List the rule number and what product the rule is in.
2. Ask your questions about how it works or what it means.
3. List any conflicts with other rules.
4. Describe any changes in balance or tactics it causes.
5. List any typos or mistakes.
6. Indicate anything that should be added, deleted, or clarified.

WANT MORE PRODUCTS?

Then send in a playtest report on the ship and scenario in this issue. If you don't test them, we will have to, and that takes time away from designing more new products!

PUBLISHER'S INFORMATION

STARLETTER is written by Amarillo Design Bureau and published by Task Force Games. *STARLETTER* is Copyright © 1991 Amarillo Design Bureau. Subscriptions to *STARLETTER* cost \$5 for six issues (one year) in the US, Canada, APO, and FPO. Issues are mailed First Class Mail. Overseas subscriptions are \$10 for six issues sent by Air Mail. All payments must be in US funds. All checks must be drawn on a US bank and have magnetic code numbers. International Post Money Orders are also acceptable. Send subscriptions to Task Force Games, Post Office Box 50145, Amarillo, TX 79159. Make checks payable to TASK FORCE GAMES.

BACK ISSUES

Back issues #57 to date are available from TFG Spare Parts for \$2 each (US). These issues included:

- #57: Romulan RoyalHawk SSD, SP463 Tang Chi.
- #58: Revised SSDs for Gorn DD, Orion CR, Fed CVA; new New SSDs for Lyran Bobcat-C, Klingon G1N.
- #59: Kzinti Combat Tug SSD, SP60 Battle of Adanerg.
- #60: SP636 Mirror Image Monsters, SP598 Mating Frenzy (space dragons!), Historical Scenario Cross Index.
- #61: Klingon F5W SSD, SP502 Mothball Mutiny.
- #62: Federation Battleship SSD: SP1061 Taste of Fire; F&E Micro Scenario 1001 Last Link.
- #63: Federation DW SSD; SP1211 Scout Report.
- #64: Federation FFB SSD; SP1301 Interceptor Training.
- #65: Lyran Mountain Lion SSD; SP1311 Roar of the *Golden Cub*.
- #66: Kzinti Scout-Drone frigate SSD; SP70 Settle their hash
- #67: Romulan FlameHawk SSD; SP1201 Attrition Assault.
- #68: Kzinti First Carrier SSD and Scenario.

TASK FORCE GAMES SPARE PARTS

Spare parts are available for all Task Force Products. Contact Task Force for a price list. All TFG products are available by mail from TFG. Write for a catalog and price list.

SFB ON GENIE COMPUTER NETWORK

Talk to the Star Fleet Staff directly by computer modem. Star Fleet is Category 10 on Page 805 Menu Item #1. Call 1-800-638-9636 for info on GENie. The computer system provides overnight access to the staff and the answers to your game questions. New SSDs, scenarios, and playtest modules are available for downloading on page 1021. Get updated product release and order information on page 1020. Join in ongoing discussions of new rules and ships, or propose your own. Weekly real-time conference with SFB staff. You can contact "TFG\$" or "ADB\$" directly via Electronic Mail on GENie.

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