



STARLETTER #74

The Official *Star Fleet Battles* Newsletter

Nov 1991

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**TASK
FORCE
GAMES™**

SCANNERS REPORT: NEW PRODUCTS!

- ★ MODULE P3 (25 new scenarios) will be available 10 Dec.
- ★ MODULE J FIGHTERS was shipped to stores late Nov.
- ★ MODULE K FAST PATROL SHIPS went to the printers on 15 Nov and will ship to stores in early December.
- ★ TACTICS MANUAL, CAPTAIN'S EDITION will be shipped to stores in January. A completely-updated edition.
- ★ MODULE S1 (Best of the Captain's Log Scenarios) is in preparation for early next year.
- ★ CARRIER WAR is in preparation for early next year.
- ★ MODULE R5 will be released at Origins-GenCon with New Heavy Cruisers, Heavy Command Cruisers, Battle Control Ships, and Battleships for most races.
- ★ NEW PRODUCTS IN DEVELOPMENT: Role-playing SFB, Modules R1-R2-R3-R4, three card games, Captain's Log #10.

TASK FORCE NEWS

- ⊙ COLUMBUS (Viceroys Expansion #1) will be shipped in January of 1992 for the 500th anniversary!
- ⊙ KING'S BOUNTY will be shipped early December.
- ⊙ STARFIRE will return soon! Details next issue.
- ⊙ CAPTAIN'S RULEBOOK and CAPTAIN'S SSD PACK were temporary products for sale during the transition to the Doomsday Edition. These will be deleted from the product line by the end of the year. If you want these, get them now.

THE SCENARIO BOX

There is a box of scenarios in the ADB office, hundreds of them collected over 10 years. Some were read when they came in; most were not. Some were given SP numbers; some were not. Some should have been rejected on sight, some have become obsolete with Doomsday. Steve Petrick is going through the box now, and many of these old scenarios are being processed for playtest (20 of them are in Module P3!), and many are being rejected. It may seem silly to hold a scenario in the file for several years and *then* reject it, but we didn't have time to look at them before this, and holding them another ten years isn't going to improve the situation. If your name is listed below, we have a rejected scenario from you in the Purple File. If you want, you can send a stamped self-addressed envelope and we'll send your scenario back so that you can update it to Doomsday standards and resubmit it.

Scott Abel*, T Abronowitz, W J Becker, Booth, M Bennett, B Brickeen, G Cree, D Cadman, P Demerecz, S Gunter, M Geiger, P Garcia, S Holland & B Stennes, M LaBossiere*, J Moore, B McKinnon, M Novean, J Peterson*, E Perez-Albuerne, D Ricketts*, T Reitsma, S Saus, V Solfronk, J Spencer, Wengratis, D Wagner, J Worthen, L Zoerman.

* you have several scenarios and should send double postage.

NEW SHIP FOR STAR FLEET BATTLES

(R11.201) **COMMAND CRUISER (CCX)**: A drastic improvement over the standard CC. No standard heavy cruisers were converted. All CCXs were controlled by Dukes, the Arch-Duke, or the King himself. Any CAX conversion would have resulted in a ship identical to the CCX in any case.

NAMES: *Necromancer III, Sorceress, Redeemer, Death Seeker, Warlock, Enchantress, Seductress, Heartcleaver.*

This ship was described in Module P2. See that product for the X-rules for ESGs and other systems.

F&E: CCX 11, command rating 10. See Module P2 for special rules and production costs.

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 92, 20-23 August, Milwaukee WI: National SFB championships. Info: Box 756, Lake Geneva WI 53147.

➤ PBM Campaign, Star Fleet HQ, longest-running SFB campaign system. Send SASE for info to John Berg, 1802 Cora St, Crest Hill IL 60435. On GENie, contact J.BERG11.

➤ NEWSLETTERS: If your group produces a local SFB newsletter, we'd like to hear about it. It can be arranged for you to reprint Starletter in your newsletter; send SASE for details.

➤ SANCTIONED tournaments use the 1991 Tournament Book rules and may offer a chance to become a Rated Ace! To have your tournament winner declared a Rated Ace, you must fulfill certain requirements and conditions, which are explained on the Rated Ace Nomination Form. This form is available free from ADB if you send a stamped envelope along with your convention announcement; it is also included in TFG's Tournament Pack. In general, a sanctioned Rated Ace tournament requires a single-elimination format, or a patrol format with at least three rounds of single-elimination finals. Must be an open convention with many non-SFB events, not a private or club meeting.

➤ FED & EMPIRE: Tom Gorgas is going to try to run the first-ever Play-By-Mail campaign for F&E. If you want to play, send a stamped self-addressed envelope to Tom Gorgas (Fleet Command), 303 Ford City Road, Freeport PA 16229 for info.

➤ TOTAL CON-FUSION 6, 21-23 Feb 92. Best Western, Marlboro Mass. Contact Wes Carpenter, P O Box 1463, Worcester MA 01607. Sanctioned SFB Tourney, beginner derby.

➤ SFB INVITATIONAL: 30 Nov - 1 Dec, Queens NY. Contact John Hammer, 79-10 Bell Blvd, Bayside NY 11364.

➤ HEXACON II, 13-14 March 92, Phoenix AZ. Contact Ken Burnside, 5038 N 55th Ave #1098, Glendale AZ 85301.

➤ POINTCON XV, 10-12 April 92, West Point. Contact Cadet Robert Williams, P O Box 3643, West Point NY 10997.

➤ ARISA-92, 3-5 Jan, Boston Park Plaza Hotel. Sanctioned SFB event, plus Circle of Death. Arisa Inc, 1 Kendall Square, Suite 322, Cambridge MA 02139.

➤ SHIP NAMES: Federation Police Corvette *Lt Oleg Babak*, named for the first Hero of the Soviet Union cited for action in inter-ethnic conflicts, who died 7 April 91 while covering the retreat of his platoon from an overwhelming force of ethnic militia. Federation FFX-459 *Ralph Hayles*, unjustly condemned as a "trigger-happy hot dog" for an accident in the Second Gulf War.

➤ WORTHY NAME: Japan launched the Aegis destroyer D-173 *Kongo*, their largest warship since WWII, on 26 Sept 91.

➤ STAR FLEET CAPTAIN'S PATCHES will be available again soon. Very few stores will have these, but TFG will have them available by mail order for \$5 each (plus shipping).

➤ NEXT ISSUE: Klingon D7W Heavy Command Cruiser.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

SCENARIO: SP139 *Heartcleaver*

NEW SHIP: Lyran CCX

FOR F&E: Variations for *They Who Would Be King*

(SP139.0) HEARTCLEAVER

(Y184)

by Jeff Worthen

In Y184, a strong Hydran squadron broke through the Lyran screening forces and headed towards a minor, but important, Lyran colony in the Bloody Claw County. The Lyran forces in this area had been stripped of reserves by other Hydran operations and the continuing need to supply ships to defend against the burgeoning Kzinti and Federation forces as well. The Lyran Sector Commander found he had only one ship that could possibly make the interception.

The *Heartcleaver* was soon on her way.

(SP139.1) NUMBER OF PLAYERS: 2; the Hydran player and the Lyran player.

(SP139.2) INITIAL SET UP

HYDRAN: Lord Bishop *Vengeance* (3x Stinger-2) in 0229, Mongol *Assassin* (6x Stinger-2) in 0230, Tartar *Strongbow* in 0130, all heading B, speed max, WS-III.

LYRAN: CCX *Heartcleaver* with four Bobcats on mech links in 2215, heading F, speed max, WS-III.

(SP139.3) LENGTH OF SCENARIO: The scenario continues until all forces belonging to one side have been destroyed, captured, or have disengaged.

(SP139.4) SPECIAL RULES

(SP139.41) MAP: Use a floating map. The Hydrans can only disengage by acceleration in directions E or F.

(SP139.42) SHUTTLES AND PFs: All shuttles and PFs have warp booster packs.

(SP139.421) If using the optional MRS shuttles, the *Heartcleaver* and the *Vengeance* each have one. This does count against their allowable Commander's Option Items under (SP139.431).

(SP139.422) There are no EW fighters in this scenario, but in a variant of this scenario, one fighter in any squadron of eight or more fighters can be an EW fighter. If EW fighters are not used, such fighters would be standard fighters.

(SP139.423) The four Bobcats carried by the *Heartcleaver* are standard Bobcats; no leader, scout, or other variants can be carried. Casual PFs might be added to the Hydrans as a balance factor.

(SP139.43) COMMANDER'S OPTION ITEMS

(SP139.431) Each ship can select additional or special equipment as Commander's Option Items (e.g. T-bombs, extra marines, etc.) up to 20% of its combat BPV. See (S3.2) for details and exceptions.

(SP139.432) All drones are "fast;" i.e. speed-32.

Each drone-armed ship can purchase special drones up to the historical racial percentages as part of the Commander's Option Items. Note that (S3.2) allows drone ships extra points for this purpose.

(SP139.44) REFITS: All units that take part in this scenario have received all available refits.

(SP139.5) VICTORY CONDITIONS: The Hydrans win by:

destroying the CCX, *OR*

crippling the CCX and disengaging at least one uncrippled ship in direction B from the CCX.

The Lyrans win by preventing the Hydran victory conditions and crippling or destroying at least two Hydran ships.

If neither side fulfills its conditions, the scenario is a draw.

(SP139.6) VARIATIONS: The scenario can be played again under different conditions by making one or more of the following changes:

(SP139.61) Replace the Hydrans with a Kzinti force of a CC and two CMs.

(SP139.62) Add a Buffalo Scout to the Hydran force.

(SP139.63) For a smaller and faster battle, replace the CCX and four Bobcats with a DWX and two Bobcats. Replace the Hydrans with a Baron Light Command Cruiser (6x Stinger-2), Buffalo Hunter DW (2x Stinger-2), and Rhino Hunter DW.

(SP139.7) BALANCE: The scenario can be balanced between players of different skill levels by one or more of the following:

(SP139.71) Change the Lord Bishop to an Apache.

(SP139.72) Replace the Mongol and its fighters with a Tartar.

(SP139.73) Delete one or more Bobcats from the Lyran or add one or two Harriers on mech links to the Hydrans.

(SP139.8) TACTICS

LYRAN: The CCX must destroy one Hydran ship while the Bobcats amuse the other two. It will probably be easier to destroy one of the CMs first. If the Hydrans have not used warp packs, simply move the battle at a speed of about 24 until the Stingers are out of it for a few turns. This will radically change the balance of power.

HYDRAN: Concentrate fire on the CCX until it is destroyed. Once you have crippled it, send one of your ships off to disengage by distance (or threaten to) as this will either win the scenario or at least force the Lyran to spend power chasing that CM. If things aren't that clear, send two ships off at an angle to each other as he cannot chase both.

And remember the hellbore. You can *always* hurt him once you get one of his shields down, so knock one down and keep pestering him with hellbore shots.

FEDERATION & EMPIRE

(BH2.5) VARIATIONS FOR *THEY WHO WOULD BE KING*

The F&E Scenario (BH2.0) *They Who Would Be King* was in Starletter #73. These are variant rules for that scenario.

(BH2.51) NO GENERAL WAR: Assume a Lyran Civil War about Y168 or Y169. Add 1 DN, 3xCW, 3xDW, and one battle pod to Red Claw and EB; the same plus one BC to Foremost. For extra interest, add a CV to Red Claw and a CVL to the other two.

(BH2.52) WEAK KING: Add a fourth player, who controls only province 0408, and who has one BCH (actually a 10-point Royal Tiger pre-dreadnought), one CL, one DD, and one FF in his fleet. For a stronger king, add three more BCHs commanded by loyal Marshals.

(BH2.53) EXTRA PLAYER: Add the Far Stars Duchy (with a fleet equal to Red Claw, or perhaps smaller, but with a TGP instead of a TGC). Their forces are off-map (and they alone can use the off-map area), except that they control the on-map province at 0103. There is no exploration during a Civil War. No survey ships are available.

(BH2.54) COMBINATIONS: To combine (BH2.51) and (BH2.53), add one BC (and one CVL if using carriers) to Far Stars. You can even add (BH2.52) to either (BH2.51) or (BH2.53) or a combination of the two with no problems.

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.

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.

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 from #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 SSDs for Lyran Bobcat-D, Klingon G1N.
 - #59: Kzinti Combat Tug SSD, SP60 Battle of Adanerg.
 - #60: SP636 Mirror Image Monsters, SP598 Mating Frenzy (space dragons!), Historical Scenario Cross Reference.
 - #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 *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.
 - #69: Federation NCA and SP275 Passing the Football.
 - #70: Klingon D5W NCA and SP79 Second Helping of Hash.
 - #71: Hydran DW, SP276 Coming Thunder, Kaltic Freestates.
 - #72: Neo-Tholian Battleship, SP1353 *Sword of the Holdfast*; Hydran options for F&E.
 - #73: Frax CC SSD, F&E Scenario *They Who Would Be King*.
- All issues are in stock, but don't wait too long!

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. Ask your local computer dealer or club 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. 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.

TASK FORCE GAMES
POST OFFICE BOX 50145
AMARILLO TX 79159-0145

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