



STARLETTER #92

The Official *Star Fleet Battles* Newsletter

November 1994

\$2

**TASK
FORCE
GAMES™**

TIME FOR A CHANGE

Starletter has been around since 1982, but it's time for it to grow into something better. Starting in January 1995, Starletter will be absorbed into the new monthly *Star Fleet Universe* news magazine *STAR FLEET TIMES*. SFT will be 12 pages and come out 10 times a year, giving you many times the fun and value that Starletter has brought you all of these years.

Star Fleet Times will be produced for TFG under a special contract with Agents of Gaming. (So don't think that this new publication is going to take ADB away from working on new races and new products!) Everything you found in Starletter will be found in SFT, along with pages of tactics, new scenarios, fiction, updated product release information, and other fun. Editor Bruce Graw has been given wide latitude and a mandate to seek out player input and FUN things to print.

Star Fleet Times subscriptions will be \$15 per year (\$16 in Canada, \$22 for overseas airmail). Your Starletter subscription will, however, be converted into a Star Fleet Times subscription on a one-issue-for-one-issue basis. (If you do NOT want your subscription converted, notify TFG before 5 Jan 95 and they will send you either a refund or credit slip, your choice. If you do not notify them, your subscription will be converted automatically.)

If you want to subscribe, write to Agents of Gaming, P O Box 31571, Dayton OH 45437. Send any input there.

According to the current plans, SFT#1 will include two of the new Fast Cruisers, SFT#2 will include the ISC and Tholian heavy cruiser maulers, SFT#3 will include the first "Light DNs", and SFT#4 (April 95) will include several unusual ships.

NEW SHIP FOR STAR FLEET BATTLES

(R5.206) KZINTI MEDIUM DRONE X-CRUISER (CMXD): The Kzinti designed this class for independent stand-off drone bombardment missions, but it was a valuable asset as a fleet scout and drone defense platform. The data is the same as the CMX except that the explosion strength is 16, year in service is Y184, it has the scout ♦, and it counts as a DB ship. Note that the BX rack (six drones, triple reloads) is a new rule item.

SCANNERS REPORT

This schedule is highly speculative and subject to change at any moment, but does give you an idea where we are going:

★ CAPTAIN'S LOG #16: Now on the press. Enlarged 96-page format (including 8 brand new SSDs) PLUS the new 16-page FRAX SSD Book. Release for Christmas, \$15.

★ WARLORD BOARD GAME: Geomorphic maps, 16 pages of rules, counters compatible with F&E (although the game system is totally unrelated). Dec or Jan.

★ RED ALERT: Star Fleet Battles combat card game. The format is still undecided. March?

★ MODULE M: MARINES: With a recent breakthrough in BP diagram technology, this product MIGHT get done next spring.

★ CAPTAIN'S LOG #17: Another of the enlarged format.

★ MODULE C4: At least four new computer-simulated races used for combat training. Currently set for Origins.

★ ADVANCED OPERATIONS, the next F&E product, will have X-ships, Marines, and a special late-war scenario.

★ PRIME ADVENTURES #1 for Prime Directive in Dec.

⊕ SKY MARSHAL #1, the Starfire journal, appears in Dec.

All TFG products (and spare parts for them) are available by mail. Write to TFG for a catalog and price list. All products are available from TFG mail order; include \$4 shipping and handling for all orders in the US; others ask for rates. Task Force accepts Visa, Mastercard, and Discover card for your convenience.

SO YOU WANT TO PLAYTEST?

We do not recognize or send playtest materials to groups until they start sending playtest reports to ADB. Don't ask if you can playtest; start playtesting! Include a stamped reply envelope for an evaluation of your efforts and new assignment.

We still need reports on the following scenarios from P modules!

Module P1: SP64. Module P3: SP336, SP109, SP344, SP1281 (re-test using temporal elevator), SP278.

Module P4: SP1064, SP374, SP864.

CL#12: All of them. SP225A use 3xD4 vs 4xPC. SP248 and SP225 have no T-bombs for the Tholians.

CL#13-14, MO#2: All of the SPs. CL#15: All of the SLs.

Starletter: SP221, SP266, SP268, SP1718; F&E TWWBK.

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 95, 13-16 July, Philadelphia Convention Center. ADB will again be the exclusive operator of large SFB events. SFB and F&E championships; Prime Directive events. Info from Gama, P O Box 3100, Kent, OH 44240. or 1-800-529-EXPO (in Ohio 216-673-2117).

➤ GENCON 95, 10-13 August. Mostly RPGs, but includes the largest SFB event outside of Origins. Prime Directive National Championships. Info from PO Box 756, Lake Geneva WI 53147. (They promised a better room this year, again!)

➤ SOUTHWEST COMIC FESTIVAL, 9-11 Dec, Austin TX Convention Center. SFB and PD events. PO Box 650201, Austin, TX 78765-0201.

➤ JONESCON II, 14-15 Jan 95. Cuong Nhu Karate Health Center, 809 W. University Ave., Gainesville, FL. Contact: Peter Taylor (904) 378-4162.

➤ ROUNDCON, 27-29 Jan 95; Quality Inn NE, Columbia SC. Info from Trella Wilhite, (803)-695-9473 or send stamped envelope to her at USC, P O Box 80018, Columbia, SC 29225.

➤ TOURNAMENT UPDATE: Send TFG \$2 for the four-page tournament update with revised SSDs and updated rules. The six new ships are sanctioned as of 1 Jan 1995.

➤ STAR FLEET WARLORD: Agents of Gaming operates this play-by-mail strategic SFB campaign in the Greater Magellanic Cloud. Buy ships to search for (or conquer, or defend) resources needed to buy even more (and bigger) ships. For a rulebook (with no obligation to play), send \$5 for postage and handling to Agents of Gaming, P.O. Box 31571, Dayton, OH 45431-0571.

➤ LONGEST-RUNNING SFB PLAY-BY-MAIL CAMPAIGN. It began in 1985 and is now in Turn #52, Y191 in the middle of the Andro Invasion. Join us! Send a stamped self-addressed envelope to John D Berg, 609 Apollo Dr, Joliet IL 60435

➤ STARLIST (a list of known SFB players) is available from Task Force. Send \$1 and a stamped self-addressed envelope. They hopefully will have someone within driving range for you.

➤ FREE ERRATA BOOK, listing all errata and typos for SFB, is available from TFG. Send a 9x12 envelope with 75¢ US postage to receive yours! (Canadians must provide 86¢ US postage or three IRCs. Foreigners provide six IRCs.) This errata book has been uploaded to GENie and Compuserve.

NEW SCENARIO FOR STAR FLEET BATTLES

(SP1724.0) STAND AND DELIVER

(Y185)

by Steven Paul Petrick, Texas

A Kzinti CMXD is ready to conduct a timed bombardment mission when Klingon PFs attack. The Kzinti Captain must delay or destroy the PFs and hold his position (remain on the fixed map) until it is time to load and launch his bombardment drones. He knows that the Klingon PFs will be short on fuel and will have to disengage soon, but will it be soon enough?

(SP1724.1) NUMBER OF PLAYERS: 2; the Kzinti player and the Klingon player.

(SP1724.2) INITIAL SET UP

KZINTI: CMXD *Many Arrows* in 2215, heading at player's option, speed max, WS-III.

KLINGON: PF Flotilla (6x G1) enter map on Impulse #2 of Turn #1 anywhere along the xx30 map edge; heading A, B, or F; speed max; WS-III.

(SP1724.3) LENGTH OF SCENARIO: The scenario continues until all forces belonging to one side have been destroyed, captured, or have disengaged. See (SP1724.45).

(SP1724.4) SPECIAL RULES

(SP1724.41) MAP: The map is fixed; it does not float. Any unit leaving the map has disengaged and cannot return. The Kzinti units can only disengage from the xx01 map edge. The Klingon units can only disengage from the xx30 map edge. Units which disengage in unauthorized areas are considered destroyed.

(SP1724.42) SHUTTLES AND PFs: All shuttles and PFs have warp booster packs.

(SP1724.421) MRS shuttles may be purchased [up to the limits in (J8.5)] under (SP1724.431).

(SP1724.422) There are no fighters in this scenario. In a variant in which fighters are present, use the standard deployment patterns (one EWF for each squadron of eight or more fighters) for EW fighters.

(SP1724.423) The six PFs are a standard flotilla of standard G1 PFs including one leader and one scout.

(SP1724.43) COMMANDER'S OPTION ITEMS

(SP1724.431) Each ship can purchase additional or special equipment as Commander's Option Items (e.g., T-bombs, extra marines, etc.) up to 20% of its Combat BPV. See (S3.2) for details and exceptions.

(SP1724.432) 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.

(SP1724.433) Prime Teams (G32.0) are not available in this scenario; they were not normally assigned to drone ships.

(SP1724.44) REFITS: The Klingon PFs have all received the shield refit. There are no other refits available to any unit involved in this scenario. If other units are added to this scenario, they will include any refits available to them in Y185.

(SP1724.45) KLINGON ENDURANCE: The CMXD is at the limit of the operating range of the Klingon PFs.

(SP1724.451) The PFs have a finite amount of time to destroy or drive off the CMXD before they must start back to their base. The Kzintis know the PFs will have to break off their attack, but do not know precisely when. (There are too many variables in the degradation of the PF's engines for the Kzintis to calculate precisely when they will have to turn for home.) To reflect this uncertainty, place seven counters (numbered from one to seven) into a cup. The Klingon player

randomly draws one counter and sets the cup with the remaining counters aside so they can be examined after the scenario. The Klingon player observes the number on the counter he drew and places the counter face down in view of the Kzinti player so that he may examine it after the scenario. The turn the Klingon PFs must exit the map is indicated as follows (they can leave early to improve level):

CNTR	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Exit Turn	#7	#8	#9	#10	#11	#12	#13
Victory Effect	Klingons +1 level		No effect			Klingons -1 level	

(SP1724.452) Any Klingon PF which fails to exit the map by the end of the indicated turn is presumed to have been destroyed (as a result of its engines burning out during its trip back to its base). The PF is destroyed immediately at the end of the designated turn; the Klingon player does not have the option of ordering the PFs to commit suicide by remaining on the map additional turns in an attempt to defeat the Kzinti ship.

(SP1724.46) KZINTI DETERMINATION: The commander of the Kzinti ship has never failed an assigned mission. He will not disengage unless his ship is crippled or more than half of the drone racks have been destroyed and not repaired (i.e., more than four). This condition is determined at the end of each turn after completing any repairs that turn. If either of the two conditions apply at any time (crippled or more than four drone racks are currently destroyed), he must disengage (i.e., move toward the xx01 hex row as a seeking weapon) as he will now accept that the safety of his ship is more important than his record. He must disengage if either condition applies even if the Klingon PFs have themselves disengaged.

(SP1724.5) VICTORY CONDITIONS: The Klingons win a Marginal Victory if the Kzinti ship is forced to disengage by any means. The Klingon level of victory is raised one level (S2.3) for each PF more than two undestroyed at the end of the scenario (i.e., if all six PFs survive and the Kzinti ship was forced to disengage, the Klingons win an Astounding Victory). If the Kzinti ship is destroyed, the Klingon victory level is raised two levels (i.e., if four PFs survive and the Kzinti ship was destroyed, the Klingons win an Astounding Victory). The Klingon victory level is also affected by the turn on which they actually exit.

The Kzintis win a Marginal Victory if they have not disengaged [or been forced to by (SP1724.46)] by the end of the scenario. The Kzintis Victory level is raised by one for each PF more than two that is destroyed, including any lost as a result of their failure to exit the map at the end of the required turn. Captured PFs count as destroyed.

(SP1724.6) VARIATIONS: The scenario can be played again under different conditions by making one or more of the following changes:

(SP1724.61) Reverse the roles with a Klingon D5XD and Kzinti Needle PFs. The D5XD was published in Captain's Log #16.

(SP1724.62) Allow the Klingons to use different variants of G1s. For added fun, don't tell the Kzinti what types you are using, and of course use a variety of types within a single flotilla.

(SP1724.63) Use only three Standard G1s against a Kzinti FDX for a smaller and faster battle.

(SP1724.7) BALANCE: The scenario can be balanced between players of different skill levels by one or more of the following:

(SP1724.71) Delete one or two G1s from the Klingon side.

(SP1724.72) Replace the G1L or G1S with standard G1s.

(SP1724.73) Add a PF or two on mech links to the CMXD.

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, or written on a report form. 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 before you can do another one. More assignments are available on GENie or CIS; 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 to completion 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.

PUBLISHER'S INFORMATION

STARLETTER is written by Amarillo Design Bureau and published by Task Force Games. *STARLETTER* is Copyright © 1994 Amarillo Design Bureau. Subscriptions to *STARLETTER* cost \$5 for six issues (one year, First Class Mail) in the US, Canada, APO, and FPO. Overseas subs are \$10 for six issues by Air Mail. European customers write: Task Force Games UK, Unit 1, Annesley Farm Workshops, Weavers Lane, Annesley Park, Nottingham NG15 0AT Telephone: 0623 722550; Fax: 0623 722551. All payments must be in US funds. All checks must be drawn on a US bank and have magnetic code numbers. International Postal Money Orders are also acceptable. Send subscriptions to TFG, PO Box 50145, Amarillo, TX 79159. Make checks payable to TASK FORCE GAMES.

BACK ISSUES #57-#92 are available from Agents of Gaming for \$2 each (US). This includes the earlier issues which have been out of stock for years. Agents of Gaming also has copies of the SubSpace News issues #1-#4 for \$2 each.

- #79: Fed NCL boarding diagram & scenario. F&E ships.
- #80: Gorn Fast Carrier Resupply ship and Scenario. F&E.
- #84: Old (Tholian) Galaxy Raider.
- #85: Klingon Early Years F4 SSD and scenario.
- #86: Tholian CWV.
- #87: Federation commando FF, scenario; unusual F&E ships
- #88: Lyran DWV carrier and scenario.
- #89: Frax submarine and scenario.
- #91: Federation mauler *Velikovsky* and scenario.

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 or call GENie Client Services at 1-800-638-9636 (Voice Only). 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 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.

COMPUSERVE users can contact ADB at 71333,2123 or find us in the Board Games section of Play-by-Mail games.

AMERICA ON-LINE: Support has been discontinued. The atmosphere was not conducive to a constructive conversation.

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