

MONGOOSE PUBLISHING PRESENTS

Signs & Portents



36

WARGAMER

Recruit Squad

Desperate Measures For The Mobile Infantry

Ghosts of Omelos

The Dilgar Are Back in A Call to Arms!

Battlefield Evolution

First Contact For This Great New Game

Plus... Extinction Protocol part 2, Making Jungle Terrain For Starship Troopers, Mini-Gecko Construction Scratch-Building Guide and lots, lots more!

S&P Wargamer 36

September 2006

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What a month it's been! Here at Mongoose Hall we have been feverishly working away on Battlefield Evolution, our exciting new game of modern combat. Battles have been raging between the four starting forces in the Studio, and only this very day my plucky Europeans finally tasted defeat at the hands of Chris Longhurst's PLA. I'd been on a good run so I can't really complain, other than at the abysmal shooting of my German tank crews. The 140mm gun on the Leopard 2 is as potent as any in the game, but not when you keep rolling ones!

My Apache Longbow didn't last long either. Having strafed a convoy of NORINCO fast attack vehicles it was unceremoniously shot down by a Chinese J-12 fighter. We did get a measure of retribution when the J-12 crashed into a Type 99 MBT later in the game but by then it was too late, despite a brave performance from a British Warrior MCV which repeatedly fired at a Type 99 in an effort to shatter Chinese morale. In the end though we lost a tight contest and Chris's PLA march on victorious.

Now I have to sit impatiently waiting for the next set of pre-painted samples to come back, as well as the artwork for the USMC Force Recon Team and the WZ-551 APC. All in all, this is as exciting a project as I have been involved in since I joined Mongoose in the dim and distant past, and I'm pretty sure that you guys are going to love it, judging by the amount of feedback on our forums. I think 32 pages on one thread in 24 hours may be a record!

Inside Matthew Sprange has penned an introductory article to give you even more information, along with some in development photographs. Enjoy.

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WARFARE IN THE NEAR FUTURE by Matthew Sprange

Regular readers of Signs & Portents will know that here at Mongoose we have a million ideas for cool games of all descriptions. Some never get past the 'scribble on the back of an envelope' stage, while others are considered worthy of a closer look and begin the process of development.

Basic mechanics are drawn up, art commissioned, sometimes even prototype miniatures are produced, as visitors to our last Open Day would have seen with the large scale Babylon 5 Thunderbolt fighter. Occasionally, we preview our ideas here in Signs & Portents. A while ago, we published the office outline of a Stalingrad game based on the Starship Troopers rules (no, we haven't proceeded any further with this game as yet – sorry!). More recently, we published a proto-version of Victory at Sea, a World War II naval game that I had been fiddling with as a private project for more than a year. The response we received was so good

that we gave it the green light, and you will see the game appearing in your local stores this November!

This is another look at a game's outline, one called Battlefield Evolution. There is a difference to this game, however – it has already been given the green light, and you can expect to see it in stores come January 2007. . .

The Battlefields of 2010-15

Battlefield Evolution is the fast-paced game of opposing real-world military forces in the near future, who have access to all the exciting technologies that are just around the corner. From 'lethality upgrade programmes' of existing hardware to all new equipment such as the Land Warrior and FIST initiatives, players will have the chance to build forces that are believable and yet will allow you to test a wide variety of 'what-if?' confrontations and conflicts.

Future Warfare/Future Wargaming

There have been several advances, in terms of both real world events and miniatures technology, that have made Battlefield Evolution possible. As well as demonstrating what may be happening in the future of modern warfare, we are also taking the opportunity to showcase the future of wargaming itself.

The miniatures in Battlefield Evolution, from the humble militia soldier to the latest in helicopter gunships, come pre-painted, ready to play right out of the box. However, these are not the bendy plastic pre-painted models you have seen in the past, nor are they collectible in nature (that is, they are not sold 'blind' in closed sets but in windowed boxes that show you exactly what you are getting). These models are painted to a standard better than, we estimate, 90% of players can paint themselves. You will be proud to have

these models on your shelf as display pieces, as well as on your tabletop. I'll rephrase that so it is clear. . .

The miniatures in Battlefield Evolution are pre-painted to an expert level.

Take a look. . .



PLA Type 99 MBT

Now, this level of detail has been available for some time, but always at a premium. The technology has now become available that allows us to aim for a price point equal to what you would normally expect to pay for unpainted metal miniatures.

So, what you now have is a game that has quality-painted miniatures, ready to play from the box, for no greater investment than you are currently making in your hobby. Well, except that you will be buying less paints and glue. So it is practically a bargain!

The Game System

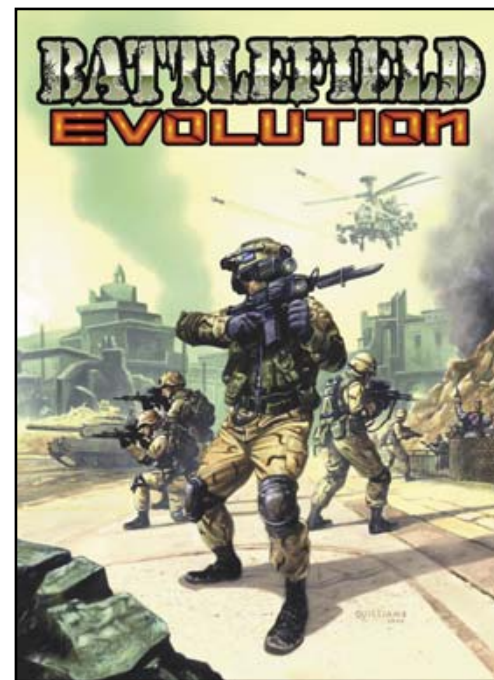
With such awesome models at our disposal, we had to have a game system to match them.

Fortunately, we already had Starship Troopers under our belt. The core of this game was close to perfect for skirmish to battle level games in the modern age, and initial conversions of the rules proved the concept. However, we wanted to take it one step further. . .

Over the past year, we have been collating all comments made about the Starship Troopers system, whether they came from private mails or discussions on our website forum. This has allowed us to refine the core mechanics and come up with a new rules set that is fast to play, easy to pick up and has virtually no ambiguities.

We have managed to compile the game into a single rules sheet that will be supplied with every box set of miniatures. This is no cut-down/dumbed-down mini-game, however – this rules sheet could easily be used to stage tournament games, with the unit card also supplied in the box sets providing all the special rules you need to use the models within.

Serious wargamers need more than that. They like something to really get their teeth into, even if the core of the game has simple rules. We understand people like that because, well, we are with you 100%! So, three months after the release of the first wave of box sets, a hardback



rulebook will appear, containing more options and variations for you to try in your games, from full blown army lists to scenarios based on real world operations.

The Forces

From the very start, we wanted to feature four armies, thus removing the 'Zulu War' syndrome that Starship Troopers suffered from until we released the Skinnies. Thus, we will have four forces on the first month of release, each of which will have two box sets. We will then release a new box set for each army every month thereafter, ensuring you never have to wait for something new for your force, and that you will always be facing something different and interesting on the battlefield. New forces will be added later in the game's development, but initially you will have the choice of the following:



Challenger II MBT



M1A2 Abrams

Four prototype shots for you to feast
your eyes on. The finished models
will be even better!



Type 99 MBT



Toyota Hilux

United States Marine Corps: The original gung-ho military service, with all the technology provided by the USA. The first two sets released for the USMC will be an infantry squad, equipped with advanced Land Warrior sets (an array of digital and optic enhancements that allow marines to dominate the battlefield), and the M1A2 Abrams main battle tank.

European Union Coalition: They keep talking about a combined force for Europe – we will be bringing it to you a great deal sooner! We are kicking off with the British Army (what else?), with a FIST – Future Infantry Soldier Technology, similar to the US Land Warrior programme – equipped infantry section and the Challenger II main battle tank. Arguments can now commence as to which is the best tank in the world! We have a few more units for the British Army on the way, but will soon be expanding this force to include units from France, Germany and many other countries of the European Union.

Middle Eastern Alliance: Covering a range of forces from government troops to militia desperately trying to hold back the tide of oppressors eager to snatch their country's resources. This army does not always enjoy the latest in technology but it gains weaponry from a wide variety of sources and has no shortage of volunteers. The first units to appear will be an infantry squad armed with AK's and RPGs, along with a converted Hilux pick up – and as viewers of Top Gear will be aware, this vehicle is probably indestructible!

People's Liberation Army: Often regarded as a second-rate force, the Chinese PLA of the near future will have access to not only unlimited manpower but also technology that can catch a western commander off balance if he has too

many preconceptions. As well as an infantry squad (which, because of its armament, is one of the most versatile in the game), the PLA will be getting the Type 99 main battle tank in the first month of releases.

There has already been a lot of discussion about new armies for Battlefield Evolution in our office and among our playtesters. Everything from the US Army and the Israeli Defence Force to African Warlords and other militaries around the world have been suggested. We will likely hold a poll on our forums to decide which gets tackled next, once you have had a chance to get used to the game and try the existing armies out.

The Kreplakistan War

Here at Mongoose, we have been talking about a worldwide, Internet-based campaign for some time now, be it for A Call to Arms or Starship Troopers. With Battlefield Evolution, we have the perfect vehicle for such a campaign.

Likely to be launched around the same time as the main rulebook, you will have the chance to log on to our web site and record battles you fight with opponents in your local store or club. Results of games from around the world will be collated, updating a map to show you just how the various armies are doing, as they each strive for final victory.

At this time, we are expecting to present a fictional 'stan' country (currently known as Kreplakistan around the office, but that will change) that has suddenly discovered a wellspring of easy- to-drill oil that threatens to shift the global markets to unpredictable levels. Unable to come to common agreement, the major powers of the world converge on the country to stake their own claims, while the native forces desperately fight to control their own resources.

All done in the best possible taste, of course. . .

Expansion

As mentioned above, new armies are already being talked about and the pre-painted nature of the game, not to mention the worldwide campaign, will ensure you are never short of opponents. However, we have not forgotten the details either and there will be a wealth of units to try, whatever force you decide to adopt.

We already have rules in playtest for elite forces such as USMC Force Recon squads and SAS sections. There will be a wealth of armoured vehicles available for everyone, though a force comprising nothing else had best be fighting in the desert, as infantry can have a nasty punch in Battlefield Evolution! Going up the scale, there are also some truly devastating units in the pipeline, such as helicopter gunships, and we have even experimented with fast attack jets, such as the JSF, though these will be restricted to either very large games or special scenarios.

Finally, we have been experimenting a great deal with the core rules used in Battlefield Evolution and they have turned out to be as flexible as we had hoped. Rumours of my setting the Rebel Alliance against the Galactic Empire at home may not be entirely unfounded. Suddenly, that Stalingrad game does not seem so far away at all...

It's a Jungle Out There!

Making a 'Ter-Rain Forest' for the Starship Troopers Miniatures game

By Darell C. Phillips

Let's face it. You can't have an authentic rain forest terrain board without hiring Conan and an army of leaf-cutting giant bugs to clear out large enough areas of ground to manoeuvre your armies around in. Granted, if you wanted to cover the area in something that would look like an equatorial 'Humidi-Forest™,' you would spend most of your gaming time looking for your lost playing pieces while the local aquarium shop owner counted all that cash you dropped in his store while he wondered why you forgot to buy any fish. He is probably still perplexed about that, no doubt. The point to having a terrain board is for mainly adding a visual backdrop for battles and to allow selected features of the terrain to provide for line-of-sight usage according to the rules of the game you are playing.

The best game in Mongoose Publishing's offerings to best display varied purpose-built terrain (in my opinion) is still the Starship Troopers Miniatures Game. This scenic article will focus on a method of construction for a 'lightly vegetated' and thus *game functional* battle-board for use with 28mm scale miniatures. I would point out that many over in the

Roleplayer sister edition of this magazine could make good use of a well-made tabletop board to take an occasional 'out-of-body-um mind' stroll with their painted minis. Heck, even Vorlons need to work the kinks out of a spanking new encounter suit by going on a walkabout. Or not; I think I just heard another one of those famous very short vocalisms Vorlons are accustomed to saying (that would be 'NO' with a Vorlon accent). Ahem.

At any rate, I wonder if the person who first thought up the term 'It's a jungle out there' really thought it could be used to describe another world in the cosmos, orbiting a distant sun; 'Out There', indeed. This brings a thought as to whether the jungle we will see should resemble something also conveniently found here on Terra-Firma (that's *Earth* for you neon green electric violin players that enlisted in the Mobile Infantry). A case can always be made that wherever Man will go in the stars, he may see things strange, but also see things that remind him of his home world now so far distant. So maybe a fern will still be

a fern, and many of them might even be green. One day, we may just find out, but today all we're really finding is what we will be placing on our gaming table.

Before we find models of vegetation (green or otherwise), we have to have something to poke them into. Let's start with a traditional base of sculpted Styrofoam sheeting. In past articles I've described the various size and density of styro sheeting. For me, I have less of a bias than some might have with the basic white open-cell



Styrofoam material that can be found in building materials stores. For one, my technique in 'etching' the surface of my boards with acetone and a brush (flicking, not brushing it) does not have the desired effect on the higher density pink or blue material. Open-cell white Styrofoam gives a nice pitted look to my lunar and desert-style (Klendathu) terrain, while the styro is very nicely offered in two-foot by four-foot sections of various thicknesses. Also, I might point out 2'x4' pieces fit in my little Chevy Tracker much better than the eight-foot dimension that the denser stuff is sold in, truth be told.

This board was my first effort without using the etching step, as the terrain board will be meant to resemble a more terrestrial, 'greened' appearance. I've felt no down side to still using the white styro, other than losing a bit of strength to the coloured stock. I like the many thicknesses the white stock is available in as well, and I believe I have added enough protection layers to it in order for it to be a usable material. For this board, I made use of one-inch and two-inch pieces and stacked them for added depth. When I made a decision to have a four-inch total board depth, this allowed me to have sufficient thickness in order to add crevasses and deep water holes, and later, trees. Also, this might minimize any future warping of the boards, which is possible with any modular model of gaming topology. For example, I wanted to begin with a bay edge, supported by a muddy shoreline. First, I made use of a foam-cutting wire tool and cut a shoreline from a sheet of one-inch Styrofoam sheet stock. Using 3M #77 spray adhesive, I sprayed the underside of the one-inch board and the upper area of the two-inch board. Be careful to not spray too much adhesive, as it will begin to soften and slightly dissolve the styro.

Being that I wanted to add texture and some sculpted features to the top surface, I had already hand-peeled both layers of the protective weatherproof skin from the top layer of one-inch styro. I left the peel-away weather seal protection on the bottom two-inch section intact, with the idea of making the exposed flat surface into a simulated inland sea or bay. If you decide to make use of similar building material insulating board, make sure to remember a tip I have learned. If you strip off one side of the weather seal, make sure to also remove the reverse side of the same board as well. If you don't, you will find a very nicely bowed piece of styro board later. Of course, if you *wanted* a very short-horizon lunar board that you could use the low-gravity rules from S&P issue 29 (Wargamer) on, only remove one side (!). Since I like my terrain boards and my inland seas to remain flat, I left both sides of the two-inch thick piece of styro with the covering intact. The one-inch piece that was cut with the wire tool was intended for the top position. As mentioned in previous articles, the wire tool is found at most hobby stores in the Styrofoam section of the store. It is operated using common 'D' cell batteries. Well, at least they are common in the U.S., as I don't know about the size of batteries in Romania.

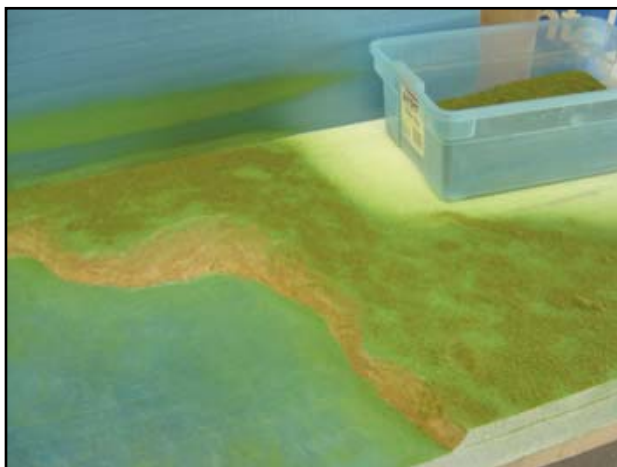
To achieve a somewhat stale body of water, ripe with algae and green tints of colour towards the shallows, I blended my favourite brand of spray paint (Krylon® H2o) right on the target area of the board, while any previously applied paint was still wet. What I did was to spray a base colour of latex gloss white on the still weather-protected foam stock. Right away, I applied a layer of deep blue latex spray, less

so toward the shoreline. After a short minute, I applied yet a third coat of paint, this time a light blue colour. I then put my hand into a disposable plastic bag, with my index finger in a pointing position. I then proceeded to 'pat' the still wet surface, which began to pull the bottom paint layers up where I patted my finger. The result was a low level mix of the paint colours, showing white and dark blue mottled variations in the total painted area. After waiting for a few minutes until the paint was drying but still not quite near the dry stage, I applied a light misting coat of Krylon H2o #2622 'Seaweed' over the entire area, with a slightly heavier dose towards the shallows/shoreline. This ended up giving a very unappealing (just what I wanted!) appearance to the water, with a heavy influence of water-borne algae growth. Something only a crocodile would love, but more on this elsewhere (sorry, you'll just have to watch for it).



I hand-painted the shoreline using my favourite vinyl acrylic paint, called Cel-Vinyl®. Previous scenic writings by me have described it as genuine Hollywood cartoon paint, and it is! Nowadays animation is made using pixels of

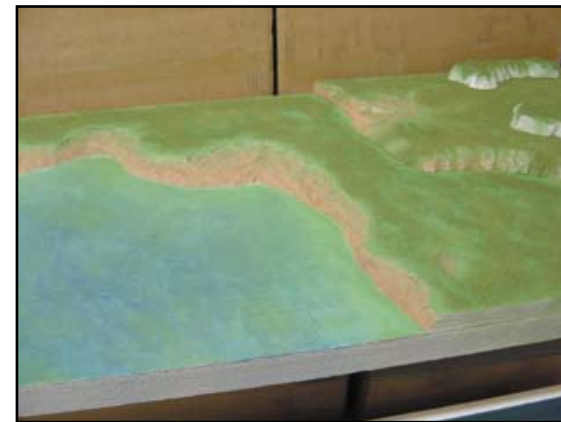
course, with rumours that animation pixels are derived using genuine ground pixies. While this *is* just rumour, I have not seen many pixies about of late (Hmm). Well, nothing to worry about, that is unless you are a pixie! (By the way, SoyLent Green™ is people you know. Shhh.). The thing I like about my cartoon paint is the rather large selection of colours. The Cartoon Colour Company, Inc. website describes the paint line as 'available in 44 colours, 32 grays, 646 Tints, 10 radiant fluorescent colours, black, white and transparent base.' Not only that, but Cel-Vinyl™ Colours are constantly tested and their accuracy and consistency maintained by the use of a Spectrophotometer. Impressive, isn't it (I wrote wryly)? Anyway, I do like their paint. While waiting for all of the previous paint to dry, I took advantage of the time and hand-brushed a grey coat of latex deck paint over any of the unpainted white Styrofoam that had not been covered thus far. In a brilliant bit of frugalness, I bought up a closeout batch of Dutch Boy® porch and floor enamel. Being made of acrylic latex, it added to my layers of protection as a first-level base coat. After all of the previous paints had dried, I took up the can of Krylon H2o seaweed and applied a liberal layer over all



of the grey area that I had hand-brushed. Using a touch of other earthy colours like tan (#2613 Panama Canal Beige), I sprayed small mixes of tan in with the liquid green seaweed colour paint. Having a shoebox full of ground foam railroad-hobby 'grass', I spread small piles of it in bunches over the wet paint, making sure to not be too even or apportioned in my deposits. After drying of the paint and using a dry 1' disposable bristle brush, I swept any loose particles of 'grass' back into the storage box.

Now in the past when using this dyed ground-rubber simulated grass, I've made it a finish coat, like most of you that have used it as a terrain flocking material. This time I decided to try something a bit different, as I then covered the entire board in a hand-applied layer of clear craft sealer. On this project then, the grass did not become a finish consisting of a fuzzy, grass-like covering. Instead, it became yet another layer of laminated colouration, adding to the finish and texture of the surface skin. Yes and even adding strength as well. For added density and a deeper colour in some spots, I would even apply a little more paint and a little more hobby grass.

I did try the gloss version of the craft sealer for this board as I had used the matte version before, but there seemed no difference other than the obvious gloss or matte finish. Since I would end up with a matte finish anyway, I'll probably go back to my previous use of the matte version. I was experimenting to see about a thicker coverage, but both seemed to cover about the same. It's important to allow for complete drying of the craft sealer (I use Mod-Podge® as found in many craft/hobby stores), but PVA or white glue is common to use as

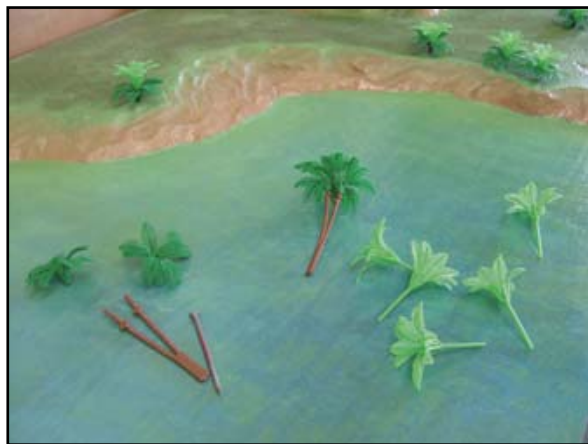


well. As it applies solid white and only goes clear when dry, it was easy to track the progress of the prepared styro. I would usually let this sit for at least a day between coats, although I seldom go more than several coats.

Another 'find' that I'll tell you about is the recent availability of yet another clear sealer, found in those building material stores in which I hang about looking for game board terrain materials in. There are many major brands of it offered, but this is simply described as a water-based wood protective finish. Now this is not the floor wax that many have used in the past as a model and decal overcoat finish. This stuff is a water-based crystal clear ultra-fast drying protective topcoat that can be used over wood, paint and wallpaper. It can be recoated in just two hours. This is great as an armoured topcoat and dries very clear. The brands that I've used thus far are Minwax®, and Flecto® Varathane®. It is available in gloss, semi-gloss and satin, and as well as in brush-on gallons of liquid etc. and spray cans (more expensive, but easier to apply). Understand that even though this finish is much less harmful to the environment (and much less toxic to us!) than oil-based finishes which would also eat up styro, you still need adequate

ventilation due to it containing glycol ethers. The nice thing is fast dry-time, a very clear and hard finish, and easy water and soap clean-up. I really like this new material to use as a clear overcoat, and it hasn't hurt my styro a bit (although I have already applied deck paint and thick craft sealer previously). I wish it was thicker, though. Although I wish I had terrain boards that were feather-light and that I could jump up and down upon, I feel that this does however give a method of protection for general gaming use. The trick is to avoid putting body weight on the board, such as leaning hard on your palms. To finally get a *very* flat finish on my boards, I hold my breath, grit my teeth and use Krylon #1311 oil-based (yikes!) matte finish. If no styro is left exposed for this stuff to dissolve, well it can't dissolve any, and it gives a very nice matte finish to the surface.

Now we come to the plants. Some have seen some of my projects on the Mongoose internet forums and have said something like 'nice, but I don't use plastic aquarium plants'. Well, I suppose they should certainly work for some effects fine, but I have never used them yet, as I am finding other hobby sources to 'borrow'



from for my 'organics'. So far, all of my organic vegetation has been sourced from two stores: craft stores and bakeries. Yes, bakeries. They have many plastic fiddly pieces that go on top of cakes as decorations that I find very useful. Like ferns. I love my ferns. I have used them unpainted in their bright green glory as 'alien' versions of small palm trees. Some may remember my city terrain and my garden on the roof of an office structure. For those, I left the central stalk part that shoves down into the cake for use as a trunk. For this project though, I did want a 'toned-down' more terrestrial colour. I also decided to sort of create a bushier version for my ground cover, so I did the following fern variant. I had a bunch of coconut palms that I did not like the trunks of (also from a bakery), so I removed the fronds and fit them under the fern stem. As these were darker leaves, they gave the appearance of older leaves. I then decided to tone down the overall bright green look, and this came off rather easily. I dusted the tops of my bushy ferns with Panama Canal Beige spray and then a spurt from the can of Krylon® Seaweed.

This did indeed bring down the bright tint as well as took much of the artificial look away, which I now like very much. I made dozens of my 'Palm-Ferns' and a few of the smaller 'just-ferns' for variation. Using a toothpick to pierce my layer of armour protection, I 'planted' my ferns in the toothpick holes.

Now I needed a forest canopy, but not so much as to inhibit miniatures play. Besides, Conan's message machine said he was already busy with his blade and I didn't want to plant too many trees. I also didn't want to feed the Bugs any more



than necessary, as they would probably just get bigger. Then there is that Sicon Corporation with all of that rejected 'Food of the Gods' stuff that they dumped years ago on some arid planet used for waste disposal, but that is another story! So I needed trees. I was already hanging around the aisles of the craft store and found something called a 'Mini Leaf'. It was for dry flower arrangement and made of plastic. It had a wire core and you could bend and pose the branches. There were several versions, and they were \$.99 US each, a reasonable price for a pre-made tree. They were durable, too. My main problem to solve was how to mount these repeatedly in a terrain board without tearing out my styro surface. My solution was to buy a pack of 24 mechanical pencils. I then removed the pointy part of the pencil structure, where the lead extrudes to write with. These were a little over an inch long, and I spray-painted them seaweed colour. After they were dry, I sprayed a little #77 adhesive on them and using a dowel as a push handle, I hand-set these into the surface, countersinking them flush to the ground level. This would allow me to place my trees upright without damaging the styro structure and allow for a snug and secure fit. Any tree 'divor' that

I wanted to later not place a tree into, I could drop a slightly shorter, trimmed stem version of my bushy fern and fill the tree hole with ground cover. Since the trees are narrow at the trunk at eye-level (but then again are we talking about a human eye or something else, higher up?), they could just be ignored by players if it was agreed, or instead it could be agreed that as in the rules they could be considered as difficult terrain (I like this better). They measure about six inches inserted in the board, so they would have a 3' LOS radius around the trunk, and be considered as Size 6 for game purposes. Now that works for a forest canopy (or a Ghillie suit for a Plasma Bug?), but many might say an invisible one to be sure. Nitpickers (affectionately considered) would need to imagine low scrub vegetation and vines under the trees, not modelled visually for these board photos. As far as a game description of the ferns, they are classified as Size 1. Being such a lowly size means they would have no real effect as difficult terrain (all of the combat units are Size 1 or larger), but could be useful for Line-of-Sight tactical considerations by Mobile Infantry and very small Arachnid units.

After I made the open water end of the terrain board, I wanted a distinguishing feature on each of the adjacent terrain sections (don't ask me



why). As displayed in the main rulebook terrain descriptions, I carved a water-filled trench, but with a slight difference. Where the book describes a water-filled Size 2 difficult terrain ditch or river, mine is a 3' wide chasm, only filled with 1' of water (but maybe deeper?). As such, the width and depth suggest for it to be a Size 3 difficult terrain feature, which could deliver falling damage. If anyone tries saying the water would help break the fall, I just might reply 'Who said it was water?' Besides, those unseen stalagmites just under the surface really hurt. Of course, the proper way to discuss the stats on various terrain features is before game play, when all players understand the terrain effects.

The third section of 2'x4' terrain contains a stagnant water-filled Cenote, (pronounced' si-'nO-tE) or grotto/sinkhole. I consider it Size 6 difficult terrain. That is, if it's not an aquatic version of 'Bug Central', that is! Eww!

The fourth terrain piece is an optional piece that can be placed at a right angle along the flat, basically un-sculpted side of the board. If you look closely, you'll perhaps see where I pinched-out parts of the white styro to reveal the open cell

beads. I decided to embrace the beady nature of the broken texture of Styrofoam and create areas that might look like open rock fields or exposed stone deposits. I even made what looks like a pile of rocks sitting on the ground. To give them a rocky colour effect, I dry-brushed light grey over dark grey and added brown for exposed dirt. It might be possible that the difficult and impassable features of the board might be covered over with a piece as large as this as a further play option, and also using a left-over one-inch piece that was additionally saved from cutting the upper-most layer of the 'sinkhole board'.

On that rather flat piece, I made it usable as a positive terrain layer by finishing both sides of it with green ground colours. It can be flipped over and placed elsewhere on the board, or the sinkhole can be covered over, just leaving what looks like (and may be used as) a camouflaged tunnel entrance as the only visible feature. In order for even more options, I made a rocky projection or hill that can cover the hole, but I



even left a piece of *that* hollowed out to be used as a cave entrance model. If used, it clearly shows a deep hole dropping away into the ground. Toward the last of the project, the board started looking like a ‘transforming-like’ toy, with many possible configurations for it to be used in. I’ll confess that one of my early ideas for this board was to actually do what I just described, but I ended up thinking it out as I went, without a precise plan. Even though I ‘winged it’ without extensive planning, I’m happy with the result. The trees can shift in number and position, trading spots with ferns, and some of the terrain hazards can be covered over if not desired. The general idea was to make a modular board that was reconfigurable in features, layout and usage.



Now that I’ve described to you how I built this board, I can be a bit more specific as to why I chose a ‘thin jungle’ for the primary layout. For me at least, there are serious considerations when designing a board. I’ve detected a contest of sorts when designing a gaming terrain board in that if you construct your scenics with an eye toward replicating the ‘real world’ on a tabletop, you end up fighting the abstractness that *must* be designed into miniatures games. An example of this might be if you design a hilltop with a sharp top, then no miniatures can be placed there, even

if the game rules would have allowed for it to be moved there. See what I mean? Thinking a bit more about that hill design, you might then decide to construct it using a series of flat sheets of Styrofoam, ending with a small flat top at the ‘peak’. The construction materials that we mostly use are certainly suited for it, being composed of sheets in various thicknesses. Terrain made for gaming is meant to be played on, not just looked at. Those other layouts are called *dioramas*, and are generally shielded from the public behind Plexiglas. Building that hilltop using a series of topographical contours is much more ‘friendly’ to the player and his units. Besides, Mankind terraces hills anyway for farming, and nature has many examples of flat-topped mountains and hills. Designing a terrain board to be game-functional is a paramount goal that needs not to be forgotten. It ends up being a series of trade-offs in board design that has to be considered for good game play (not unlike game design!). The Starship Troopers game itself is an excellent example of ‘game physics’ conflicting with our perceptions of reality. There have been questions asked to the rules masters at Mongoose about Line-of-Sight when we look at the game using our three dimensional experience in the real world. The game might be thought of as a two-dimensional framework, but with less than a full third dimension stirred into its design. A ‘Full blown 3D’ game of tabletop infantry combat can be played, but the game would certainly drag out with players stopping to change the batteries in their laser pointers while having to also make use of a very thick rulebook.

A good example of Size abstraction is the Arachnid Tunnel Assets. A Size 4 template is



four inches in diameter, and is considered to be also four inches in height. Some players scoff at the notion of a 20-foot high ring of debris, but that is what a Bug Tunnel Entrance is, if taken literally from the rules. We all want to apply logic to our games as the thinking beings that we are, but there *must* be some *abstraction* applied to them, or games become unwieldy. That was exactly why I believe that the basic description of a Terrain Feature was written in this particular way, as quoted from the rules: ‘A piece of terrain has a nominal Size equal to its height (or depth in the case of crevasses or liquid sources) in inches, rounding to the nearest whole number.’ Nothing is stated regarding the other dimensions. It was decided not to get ‘fiddly’, describing the entire length, width and height of a piece of terrain, or you would always have three numbers describing Size. No gamers would want that. Now consider that the previously stated dimension is *height*, while the cardstock Tunnel Asset templates are clearly sized in dimensions that are 90-degrees off. They are uniform circles, and are measured either as length or width (take your pick as either is correct here!). Still, the Size 4 template is to be taken as a *height* of four inches when considering Line-of-Sight. There is of course a built-in exception when it is used



as a sinkhole, and this needs to be explained to all players as to which each asset is (dare I say it? 'Innie & 'Outie'), before and during the game. The bottom line is that some things have to be abstracted in order to have proper game play flow. It's about balance.

The photos that show the terrain board here with all three panels set up, do not display any impassable terrain features. For those willing to wade through the weeds as it were, we could add a more realistic forest canopy and maybe even something the rules don't specifically describe: impassable impossibly-tangled jungle terrain. Large rock features that might be on another terrain board would be represented here by impassable clumps of jungle. Hey, it's an alien rainforest, right? The rules function the very same here, but you need a way to distinguish between the two kinds of vegetation. Earlier, I was describing my 'light' forest board as displaying all of the finished board area as totally traversable open area, with some areas of Difficult Terrain as options. I placed enough 'divots' to insert about 18-20 six-inch trees, which actually makes for some slow moving in much of the board area. Each Size 6 tree position marks the centre of a circle which has a 3' radius

of effect, but units could move through without moving any of the 'invisible' undergrowth. If you didn't mind adding more 'clutter' to the board area, you could start by cutting 6' circles from craft felt to define the Difficult Terrain boundaries without using measuring devices. There is no real penalty for this, so this decision is an easy one. I cut a small centre hole for the tree miniature in them, and also flocked them in order to more match the board surface.

Some reading this might decide that this is enough, while others would vote for 'more veggies, more!' Fair enough. It's all about tradeoffs, remember? As the ferns I used were mounted in the board, I then made up a batch with metal washers as stands. Adding them randomly onto the felt area began to fill in the empty appearance. By having movable stands, any one of them could be removed as a combat unit passed through the 'undergrowth'. I had some various plastic shapes that I bought from my local craft store, to vary the look a bit. This looks better, but now we have pretty 'terrain clutter' we have to move when the troops pass through. That's alright, too. As you'll notice, I also made up some additional circle templates of Size 2 and Size 3 scale that can be placed where desired. For Size 5 pieces, I made these a bit different by using CD disks as bases. I have a computer store, so I saved some of these from the trash bin. By using CDs as bases, these trees (Size 5) are positional anywhere, and do not use my embedded divots. I wanted the trees removable from the bases for transport, so I glued a magnet into the centre position of the base. I then covered the CD with a small amount of air-dry clay, but it didn't stick as I hoped and I had to reinforce and supplement them by a coating of superglue (superglue fixes anything...). I placed



and glued a thumbtack on the bottom of the tree trunk, which I made from one-half of a wooden skewer. This being five inches long, made up the basis of a Size 5 tree. Notice that my previous Size 6 trees were used as-is from the craft store, while these trees were made using skewers and plastic pieces salvaged from that same craft store. I flared the tree trunk out with clay, reinforced with more superglue after they dried. I was able to use the small loops at the base of the plastic pieces and pull them over the wooden skewer. These particular plastic arrangements were sold by the craft store to simulate ground cover.

Now I decided to raise the notch one more step. To distinguish between 'normal' Difficult Terrain and downright impassable stuff, I needed to crowd in even more 'fiddly bits' under my Size 5 and Size 6 trees. Buying some 2' diameter steel washers and adding flocking and more green plastic debris, I was able to place these over the felt and CD bases, using the washer hole to allow



Four views of Darell's finished terrain



the trees to poke through from below. This extra tangle of vegetation can be used to notify players that as far as the game play period is concerned, nothing short of napalm will allow passage. Adding plants is all a matter of degree and

remember that there are lots of those degrees in steamy rain forests, right? I feel the need to make a slight defence for my



apparent ignorance last month of the heritage of modern Halloween. While I was aware of the pagan roots of the holiday, I didn't word it as such. I should have said *modern* Halloween. I was however blissfully unaware that it was practiced in England/ U.K. A humorous side note to this is the discovery that according to About.com, Americans in France had begun to re-introduce the holiday to the French, back in the 1980's and 1990's. For those French that were

boycotting all-things American (probably quite a few), Halloween went on their boycott list. So for you French reading this, it is alright now to



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THE GHOSTS OF OMELOS: ECHOES OF THE DILGAR

A Special Campaign Raider Fleet List for A Call To Arms, As Introduced in *Merchants, Traders & Raiders*

By Bryan Steele

‘We are not done yet...not by a long shot. Our ghosts will haunt you.’

–Warmaster Lo’Phran, in the last moments before Omelos’ Star Erupted

In 2232, when the Dilgar were facing utter defeat and possible extinction due to the EarthForce blockade and League of Non-Aligned Worlds attack fleets surrounding their home system, a select few senior Dilgar scientists and war veterans re-routed many of their efforts. Instead of trying to break through the blockade – which they realised was a lost cause – like minds such as Warmaster Lo’Phran, medical genius and war criminal Jha’Dur, and the geneticist Ror’kash came together with a new idea...

...to begin the planning of the return of the Dilgar.

Hastily creating a lab in the vast network of tunnels under the colonies on Wahant, a group



of just a few dozen Dilgar started a movement they called the Ghosts of Omelos. The idea was to create an army of cloned Dilgar using Ror’kash’s experimental methods and Jha’Dur medicinal studies in order to survive the apocalypse at Omelos and eventually get revenge upon those who halted their Invasion. It was a good idea...at first.

Between the military dictating of Lo’Phran, the constant devious side-projects and dealings

of Jha’Dur and the sheer mad genius of Ror’kash – the three were destined to fall apart. Eventually Jha’Dur received a deal from an outside source that she would not reveal in order to go elsewhere and plan for the Dilgar’s legacy, which somehow involved the Minbari. When she left, promising to pave the way for the Ghosts to rise to true power, Lo’Phran and Ror’kash immediately began vying for power.

Without Jha’Dur’s medical technologies, the two struggled to complete the project. Between the savage distrust they held for one another and the constant problems with their ramshackle facility, the cloning project proved to be a failure time and time again. As time progressed fruitlessly, most of the original Ghosts placed themselves in cryogenic freezing chambers to be thawed out later – upon Jha’Dur’s successful return.

It was during this ten-year waiting period that a group of anarchist raiders came to loot anything that the Dilgar may have left behind and ‘accidentally’ activated the thawing process. Their fumbling released more than three-dozen Dilgar scientists and soldiers to a world they were supposed to have conquered a

decade and a half earlier. Amongst them were both Lo'Phran and Ror'kash.

The resulting commotion of their vastly late awakening ended in nine dead human raiders, two dead Dilgar soldiers – and one very dead Doctor Ror'kash at the hands of one very angry Warmaster Lo'Phran. Learning all there was to know about the current galactic state from a few captured and subsequently tortured raiders, Lo'Phran began building a fleet of warships to fulfil the Ghosts of Omelos' true nature. Even though he did not have the full understanding of what he was doing, the Warmaster put the cloning project into full swing once more.

Using the funds stolen from the raiders, Lo'Phran began to anonymously hire scum from all over the galaxy to help bring together what Ror'kash's notes said he would need to perfect the clones over time. Medical and scientific supplies from the Abbai, armour and weaponry from the Drazi and shipbuilding components from the Brakiri – these were the targets of the Ghosts' minions. A rash of raider activity in that corner of the galaxy began to raise a few eyebrows Lo'Phran's direction, but as luck would have it an old and familiar face would turn all eyes away...and toward Babylon 5.



In 2258, when Jha'Dur selfishly revealed her 'immortality serum', Lo'Phran was furious at her mistake and nearly unleashed the clones prematurely upon the galaxy in an angry reaction. Fortunately, her immediate death at the hands of the Vorlons was broadcast all over the galaxy within hours of it occurring and seeing her shuttle vanish in millions of tiny fragments eased his hand and tempered his resolve. Her folly nearly spelled an early grave for the Ghosts if the world would have known they existed from Jha'Dur's boasting, but her demise bought Lo'Phran more time to prepare.

The cloning and fleet rebuilding project went unhindered for nearly another ten years before the first batch of Dilgar clones would survive the first few weeks of life. Although the clones were not perfect, with several having major physical and mental disorders, Lo'Phran was undaunted. More batches would be made, and he would continually augment the process. No matter the cost, he would have his revenge. In time, the well-hidden and diverse fleet of raider ships would be ready to unveil upon an unsuspecting and unprepared galaxy filled with countless targets. Targets that must pay for what happened to the mighty Dilgar Imperium. The galaxy would rue what they did to the Dilgar...from the deadly haunting of the Ghosts of Omelos.

Using The Ghosts of Omelos in A Call to Arms

The following fleet list is a slightly specialised version of the Raiders fleet list found in *A Sky*



Full of Stars. For narrative reasons it gains and loses some interesting benefits from the common list, many of which are explained in greater detail in the *Merchants, Traders & Raiders* sourcebook for the Babylon 5 Roleplaying Game. This fleet list has some ships that, while absolutely balanced to join a common Raiders fleet, were specifically to be used with The Ghosts of Omelos.

Narrative fleet lists, like this one or the ones found in *The Earth/Minbari War Supplement*, are generally focussed on bringing a particular flair to your campaigns and friendly game, and should be cleared with all players and the campaign or tournament organiser before assuming you can use them in such things.

So, enjoy what we have put together here and remind all those self-righteous curs that the Dilgar did not go quietly into that good night!

The Ghosts of Omelos Fleet List

The following forms the entire fleet list for the Ghosts of Omelos:

Priority Level: Patrol

Delta-V Wing (6 flights)

Thorun Dartfighter Wing (4 flights)**

Jashakar-class Scout Ship**

Modified Freighter

Priority Level: Skirmish

Defence Post

Strike Carrier

Jashakar Modified Attack Frigate*

Priority Level: Raid

Battlewagon

Extinction-class Battlewagon

Mauler-class Omelos Cruiser*

Priority Level: Battle

Rah'Kahrn Flagship*

Ships marked with a * are new ships presented in this article, and those marked with ** can be found in the *Dilgar Imperium* fleet book.

Auxiliary Craft

Flights of smaller craft may be purchased separately and used as units in their own right. Some ships are noted as carrying one or more flights on board. These flights may be deployed at any time before or during the battle and do not cost anything extra—the cost of these flights is included in that of their parent ships.

Any ship carrying one or more Delta-V flights may replace any number of them for Thorun Dartfighter flights.

**Ghosts of Omelos Fleet
Special Rules**

The following special rules apply to all Ghosts of Omelos fleets.

League Salvage: Due to the number of Dilgar records concerning League of Non-Aligned Worlds ship designs, Ghosts of Omelos Fleets may choose up to one Fleet Allocation Point from any League of Non-Aligned World Fleet List of Battle-level or lower.

Masters of Destruction: Even though the Ghosts are mostly Dilgar clones after 2265 and beyond, their technology is well recorded in data files from the days of the height of the Dilgar Imperium. The Dilgar always excelled at displays of terribly destructive power, tearing apart enemy vessels as much for the symbol it represented as to gain victory. Many old Dilgar weapons are designed specifically for this purpose.

Any hits from any Ghost of Omelos bolter (light bolters, bolters, heavy bolters) which score a critical hit cause triple damage to the target, exactly as if the weapon had the Triple Damage trait. All other hits are resolved normally; only those hits which inflict a critical cause triple damage.

A similar rule applies to Ghosts of Omelos pulsars (light pulsars included). Any hits from Ghosts of Omelos pulsars which score a critical hit cause double damage to the target, exactly as if the weapon had the Double Damage trait. All other hits are resolved normally.

Scavengers: Ghosts of Omelos use the same campaign rules for *Scavengers* as regular Raider Fleets do (found on page 153 of *Sky Full of Stars*).

Ghost of Omelos Initiative: +0

**New Personality
– Warmaster
Lo'Phran**

One of the most infamous fleet commanders of the Dilgar Invasion, responsible for several victories along the Markab borders, Warmaster Lo'Phran brought thousands of the Imperium's enemies to their knees in his time. He was merciless and relentless, and his military might was only ever shadowed by the malicious and deadly experiments of the 'Deathwalker'. His guns rained death on many worlds throughout the campaign, and when he was talked into leaving the battlefield during the blockade – the Ghosts of Omelos were born.

Surviving through the decades of hardship of living in underground tunnels and laboratory conditions, Lo'Phran has had to toy with many experimental and extensive technologies to stay as strong physically as he was mentally. He is made up of as much genetic manipulation and bio-organic components as the clones he was trying to grow and nurture. He may have lost some of the Dilgar 'purism' that the Imperium taught, but he replaced it all with the sheer will for revenge.

Using Warmaster Lo'Phran in A Call to Arms

To include Warmaster Lo'Phran in a scenario, use the following information.

Fleet Lists

Warmaster Lo'Phran may be used with a Ghosts of Omelos Raider fleet in any game set after 2265. Conversely, with your opponent's permission, Warmaster Lo'Phran could also be used in a Dilgar Imperium fleet before 2232.

When placed in a ship, Warmaster Lo'Phran raises its Priority Level by one, so a Raid level ship will become a Battle level ship, a Battle level ship will become a War level ship, and so on.

Warmaster Lo'Phran may be placed in one of the following ships. Variants may be used if you wish to include them in your games.

Dilgar

Ochlavita-class Destroyer
Targrath-class Strike Cruiser
Tikrit-class Heavy Cruiser
Wahant-class Heavy Assault Ship
Mishakur-class Dreadnought

Raiders

Battlewagon
Extinction-class Battlewagon
Mauler-class Omelos Cruiser
Strike Carrier
Rah 'Kahrn Flagship

Lo'Phran in Battle

A ship with Lo'Phran as one of its officers gains the following benefits in battle.

Command: So long as Lo'Phran's ship is on the table and not Crippled or reduced to a Skeleton Crew, the fleet gains an extra +2 bonus to its Initiative rolls. This is not cumulative and may not be added to the bonus granted by ships with the Command trait.

Dilgar War Survivor: Warmaster Lo'Phran, unlike many of his crewmen and cohorts, is *not* one of the cloned Dilgar. From the years and years of medical experimentation, a few minor cybernetic enhancements and the sheer will to survive – Lo'Phran is one of the most survivable creatures in the galaxy. He and his closest crew have an unerring knack of getting out of a bad situation alive. Any ship that Lo'Phran is on board as commanding officer will not score the opponent full VPs unless the ship is fully destroyed (10+ Ship Explodes result on the Damage Table); otherwise half VPs are only ever scored.

Focussed Attack Protocols: Attacks with the Beam Special Trait made from Lo'Phran's ship can choose to fire the weapon in a drilling mode, removing the Beam Special Trait but adding +2 AD and the Precise Special Trait instead.

New Ships

Extinction-class Battlewagon (Raider Battlewagon Variant)

Raid

One of the first 'new age' ships the Ghosts put together after their awakening, the Extinction-class Battlewagon is a heavy hulled cruiser packed with rebuilt and salvaged Dilgar weaponry. Like other cobbled raider ships it is a slow moving and bulky vessel with lots of additional room to stash plunder and loot. Unlike its cousins, the Extinction gives up half of its spacious hangar room for additional power generators and significant ammunition stores in order to use the powerful bolter weaponry and dialled-up laser cannons. Until fully rebuilt Dilgar ships like the *Rah'Kahrn* left the spacedocks freely, the Extinction was the main vessel used by the Ghosts of Omelos.

Speed: 6 **Turn:** 1/45° **Hull:** 6 **Damage:** 38/9
Crew: 38/8 **Troops:** 3 **Craft:** 2 Thorun Dartfighters
Special Rules: Interceptors 2, Jump Point
In Service: 2241+

Weapon	Range	Arc	AD	Special
Medium Laser Cannon	20	B	4	Beam, Double Damage, Super AP
Bolters	10	F	6	AP, Double Damage
Twin Particle Array	8	A	6	Twin-Linked, Weak
Particle Beam	4	F	3	Anti-Fighter, Weak
Particle Beam	4	A	3	Anti-Fighter, Weak
Particle Beam	4	P	3	Anti-Fighter, Weak
Particle Beam	4	S	3	Anti-Fighter, Weak
Light Pulsars	8	T	6	—

Jashakar Modified Attack Frigate (Jashakar Scout Variant)

Skirmish

Unable to make much use out of the many forward scouts the Imperium left behind when it was destroyed, the Ghosts salvaged many of the old Jashakar vessels. Using their powerful computers as parts to built common sensor packages and ECM equipment for the entire fleet, the shelled-out hulls were then packed with weaponry. Now used in pairs as fast, hit and run raiders, the Jashakar attack frigates jump in on a commercial convoy and disable escorts before jumping out fast enough that no one should realise *who* just hit them!

Speed: 12 **Turn:** 2/45° **Hull:** 4
Damage: 18/4 **Crew:** 20/7 **Troops:** 2
Craft: None **Special Rules:** Jump Point
In Service: 2245+

Weapon	Range	Arc	AD	Special
Bolters	10	F	4	AP, Double Damage
Light Bolters	5	A	4	Double Damage

Mauler-class Omelos Cruiser (Omelos Light Cruiser Variant)

Raid

The largest of the old Dilgar ships to be overhauled by the Ghosts of Omelos, the namesake ship of their homeworld was heavily modified to be a true warship instead of a fast attack cruiser. Adding small hangars and significant firepower in exchange for some of its original speed, the Mauler is a full-frontal attack vessel that can punish a target from far ranges with its added laser cannons and makeshift torpedo tubes before closing the distance and tearing them apart with pulsar fire.

Speed: 10 **Turn:** 2/45° **Hull:** 5
Damage: 22/5 **Crew:** 22/5 **Troops:** 2
Craft: 2 Thorun Dartfighters or 2 Delta-V Light Fighters
Special Rules: Interceptors 2, Jump Point
In Service: 2246+

Weapon	Range	Arc	AD	Special
Medium Laser Cannon	20	B	2	Beam, Double Damage, Super AP
Pulsars	10	F	8	—
Light Pulsars	8	T	6	—
Light Pulsars	8	T	6	—
Light Pulsars	8	T	6	—
Light Pulsars	8	T	6	—
Torpedo Tubes	20	F	4	Double Damage, Slow-Loading

Rah'Kahrn Flagship (Raiders, Unique Ochlavita Variant)

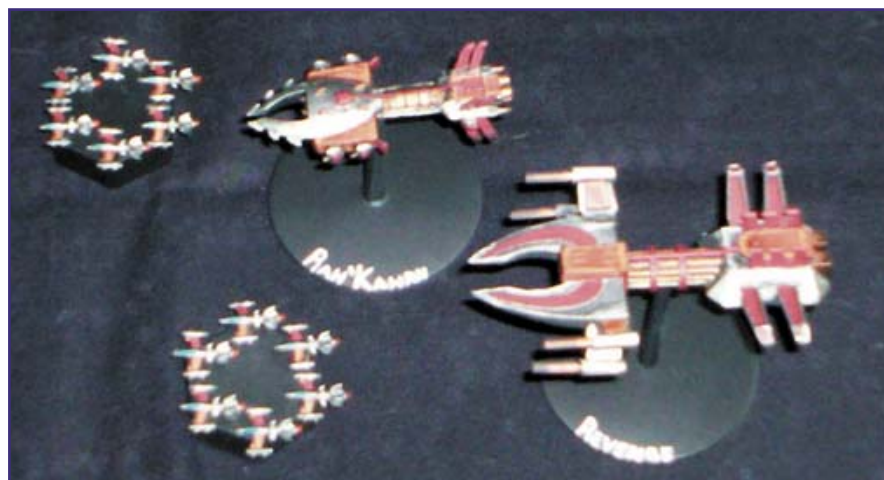
Battle

Based on a design that was supposed to be put into production long before the end of the Imperium, Warmaster Lo'Phran has put countless hours into his fast and deadly flagship. Only sharing visual similarities with the original Ochlavita hull it was based on, the *Rah'Kahrn* is a relentless killing machine – just like its inventor. Able to engage an enemy at a distance with lasers before bringing a target into range of the last remaining heavy bolter cannons the Ghosts were able to salvage. Ships much larger than it have been lulled into a false sense of security due to its size and mismatching weaponry...then were torn to flotsam by the terrible might of the Ghosts' flagship!

Speed: 8 **Turns:** 2/45° **Hull:** 6
Damage: 28/6 **Crew:** 22/8 **Troops:** 3
Craft: 2 Thorun Dartfighters **Special Traits:** Command +1, Interceptors 4, Jump Point
In Service: 2265+

Weapons	Range	Arcs	AD	Special
Medium Laser Cannon	20	B	4	Beam, Double Damage, Super AP
Heavy Bolter	12	F	6	AP, Double Damage
Energy Pulsars	10	F	6	Twin-Linked
Quad Pulsars	8	F	10	Twin-Linked
Particle Beam	4	P	3	Anti-Fighter, Weak
Particle Beam	4	S	3	Anti-Fighter, Weak
Bolters	10	A	4	AP, Double Damage
Scatter Pulsars	2	T	6	Anti-Fighter

Special Note: The *Rah'Kahrn* Flagship is important enough to the Ghosts of Omelos that it only gets the finest clone crewmen with the best genetic memories when it is put into action. In fact, not a single hired raider that *is not* a cloned Dilgar is allowed to even step foot on the vessel. As a result, it not only receives a +1 bonus to its Crew Quality checks, but it also may form a single Pentacon Formation around itself. For rules on the Pentacon Formation, see the *Dilgar Imperium* sourcebook.



Painting Your Own Ghosts of Omelos Fleet

Unlike a common Dilgar Imperium war fleet, the Ghosts of Omelos are primarily raiders with no political agenda at all, merely a drive to wreak havoc and get some revenge for the death of their species. Because of this, their vessels do not *have* to have any sort of common paint scheme at all if you do not want them to. In fact, Warmaster Lo'Phran would likely insist on most of his ships specifically looking as different as possible in order to remain a secret for as long as possible. After all, if the League thought the Dilgar were back – the Ghosts would surely get overwhelmed and become truly extinct once again!

The handful of Ghosts of Omelos vessels I have painted, including the *Rah'Kahrn* have a metal and tan dominated colour scheme with red accents and sections to give them the 'angry warship' look that I believe the Dilgar should have. I personally stayed away from the traditional Dilgar greens and reds to keep up with the idea that these are, in fact, a completely different fleet.



Whatever colours you decide to put together with your Ghosts of Omelos, they should look ragged and worn – as many of their vessels are made from decades-old hulls and parts. A good grey wash or rust-coloured inking can make them look much older and beat-up in a flash, but taking some darker metals and adding some 'battle damage' is always an option as well.

Whatever you want to do, the Ghosts would be fine wearing it. They are not too concerned with the look of their ships or the uniformity of their fleets; they are far too concerned with the all-consuming revenge over those who condemned their species!

CAMPAIGNS: REFITS AND OTHER DUTIES

Ghosts of Omelos Fleets use the following tables for Refits and Other Duties when playing campaign games.

Ghosts of Omelos Refits

2d6	Refit
2	Jump Engines: The ship gains the Jump Point trait if it did not have it before and has at least 20 Damage points. If the ship already possesses the Jump Point trait, it gains the Advanced Jump Point trait instead.
3	Ship Renders: Choose one weapon system. It immediately gains the Double Damage trait but has its Attack Dice reduced by half (rounding up).
4	Enhanced Interceptor Network: If the ship has Interceptors as a trait, it gains a +1 bonus to its Interceptor score. If Interceptors are not present, the ship gains Interceptors 1. This may only be applied once.
5	High-Cycle Bolters: If the ship has a weapon system with bolter in the name, add two AD. If not, the ship gains a Bolters weapon system, a range of 10, a Forward fire arc, 4 AD and the traits AP, Double Damage.
6	Long Range Targeting Systems: Choose one weapon system. It has its range extended by 50%. However, when using this extra range, halve the number of AD used (rounding down).
7	Additional Weapons Fitted: Choose one weapon system that has at least 4 AD. It gains an additional 2 AD. This may only be applied once per weapon system.
8	Advanced Sensor Arrays: The ship gains a +1 bonus to any attempt it makes to target an enemy with the Stealth trait. This may only be applied once.
9	Reinforced Hull: Add +10% to the ship's Damage score but reduce Speed by -1.
10	Supercharged Thrusters: The ship gains a +1 bonus to its Speed score.
11	Extra Hanger: The ship immediately gains an extra hanger and a Delta-V or Thorun Dartfighter flight, regardless of whether it possesses one already or not.
12	Flight Computer: The ship gains the Flight Computer trait if it did not have it before.

Ghosts of Omelos Duties

2d6	Other Duty
2	Echoes of the Past: The enemy are terrified by the idea that the Dilgar might actually have returned – even if they are just imperfect clones. Pick one ship (or wing) of Skirmish or lower Priority level in the enemy fleet. This ship or wing may take no part in the battle whatsoever. Neither player receives Victory Points for it.
3	Lightning Raid: Without warning the Ghosts have struck at a supply ship or convoy of the enemy. Immediately subtract 3d6 RR points from one enemy fleet and add half that number to your own (round down).
4	From Out of Nowhere: The Ghosts have been hiding in a polarised dust cloud before the next battle, surprising the enemy. The next battle in which you are the attacker (if possible) will have a +3 bonus to Initiative on the first turn.
5	Dilgar Sightings: You have managed to send a handful of imperfect clones into population centres of the controlled systems of the enemy in order to sow panic and terror due to the ‘return of the Dilgar’. Choose one of your enemies, they immediately lose 2d6 RR points and cannot recruit Crew in the following game turn.
6	Veteran Fighter Pilots: A squadron of Dilgar clone fighter pilots are showing some extremely deft genetic memories. Increase the Crew Quality of one Fighter Flight on board to 6.
7	Crucial Effort for the Rebirth: The ship’s mission is crucial to the greater effort to create new and improved batches of clones. The entire fleet immediately gains 2d6 RR points.
8	Veteran Gunners: A unit of Dilgar clone weapon experts are showing some extremely deft genetic memories. Add a +1 Attack Die bonus to all weapon systems of the ship. This may only be applied once.
9	Raiding Force: The ship carries a raiding force against an enemy fleet of your choosing. Deduct 2d6 RR points from the enemy fleet and add them to your total as you pillage and wreck his supply lines.
10	Diverting Raids: Launching fast and deadly attacks on a series of seemingly unrelated and unimportant targets, the Ghosts have crippled the communications and supply lines to one enemy’s forward fleets. Choose another player’s fleet. In its next battle, it will have one less Fleet Allocation Points available.
11	Superior Strategic Position: A routine patrol uncovers a Strategic Target previously thought to be worthless. Immediately generate a new Strategic Target on the campaign map and mark it down as being under your control.
12	Improved Cloning Batch: The research and development the Ghosts of Omelos have been performing in their secret laboratories under Wahant have blossomed into a far more improved batch of new Dilgar clones. One Battle Level Fleet Allocation Point worth of ship(s) can immediately add +1 to their Crew Quality Score, +10 to the maximum Crew Values, and +2 Troops. A fleet can only roll this result once per campaign, otherwise it must be re-rolled.

THE BATTLE FOR HONOLULU

A Starship Troopers Gaming Report - With A Difference!

By Rob Jones

To: SICOM Command
From: Lieutenant Hero
Location: Hawaiian Sector

I have to report the communication relay outpost for the southern sector of island has been destroyed by an Arachnid force.

MI casualties stand at 96.5% (28 MI listed as dead or missing in action). Our limited forces were deployed with Alpha team on the communication bunker, Bravo in the forward dugout. Their Javelin missile launchers would prove an invaluable asset in the battle that was to come.

Charlie and Delta teams were positioned on the flanks to offer support. M8 Marauder Sergeants (Reece and Martin) were in support of Charlie and Delta teams.

The initial assault by bug forces was made by warriors emerging from the water and climbing the cliff face, whilst hoppers assaulted from the air. This was held and repulsed, despite our forces receiving heavy casualties due to fire from a plasma bug situated off the coast. This fire killed both Reece and Martin.

Bravo team was by this time reduced to Private Davis, who retreated to the communication bunker. He joined the alpha team defending the bunker, continuing to fire his missile launcher until his death under a swarm of warriors. The second wave hit shortly afterward having used tunnels to mask their approach. This attacking force included tanker bugs and several additional warrior squads.

The bunker finally fell when assaulted by warrior and tanker bug units, which emerged from previously unknown tunnels. The remaining members of Alpha team were defending the roof top. Private Danby of Bravo team must be singled out for a posthumous award for his bravery. He continued to fire on an approaching tanker, despite warrior bugs closing on his position, his squad defending him as best they could.

His dieing shot hit the tanker causing a cataclysmic explosion engulfing the ammunitions stored at the bunker. The resulting explosion killed all remaining arachnid forces surrounding the bunker.

Our forces had held the communications bunker for several hours, allowing for communication to our forces to continue, but eventually succumbed to numerically superior forces. Once the bunker was destroyed the Arachnids continued inland.

I await your orders.

Lieutenant Hero

Behind The Scenes

We are the Demon Vets (Also known as the De Montfort University Veterans), a Leicester based gaming group. We wanted to run a themed game based on the Starship Troopers animated series, The Roughnecks – Starship Troopers Chronicles – ‘The Homefront Campaign’, and battle for the Hawaiian Islands.

For those of you not familiar with the series let us set the scene. Following the Arachnid invasion of earth and a series of heavy defeats, the MI set up defences on the Hawaiian Islands. The DVD shows the Roughnecks fighting on the north end of an island, with a comment from Rico that there was a large attack expected on the south end too. It is this attack the game is based on, with the MI defending a communication bunker at the rear of the table.

The objectives were simple; the MI had to defend the bunker (seen at the rear right of this photograph) and thereby keep the communication systems running for that sector of the islands for as long as possible. To help them the MI had a couple of bunkers and ammo dumps with an extensive trench network and dug outs on the cliff top, along with the possibility of repairing the communications if they went down.

The bugs had to destroy the MI forces and the bunker as quickly as possible, to do this they had a force of warriors, hoppers, tankers, cliff mites and a plasma bug just off the coast.

The scene was set for a huge battle, with nearly 3,000 points per side.



The two M8 Marauder sergeants can be seen making their way to the front of the cliff, under the cover of the natural foliage.

The first few turns for the MI were a waiting game, trying to second guess where the bug forces might break through first. It didn't take long for the bugs to get to bottom of the cliff and start climbing, whilst hoppers came swooping in under covering fire from the plasma bug.

With the bugs having multiple tunnel entrances, the MI found themselves spread thin and having to repulse attacks from all sides and from



On the edge of the cliff the MI squads engage hoppers as they come swooping in, with warriors ever present at the foot of the cliff.

the air as hopper bugs darted above. In addition the MI could hear bugs tunnelling under the surface and knew there were forces underground, ready to emerge at anytime.

When at the cliff base the bugs can't be seen by MI in the trenches, leaving the MI player with a tricky decision. Do they leave the comparative safety and cover of the trench to fire down on the warriors climbing up, thereby exposing themselves to the hoppers' attack or do they hope to shoot the hoppers down this turn and still have time to kill the warriors later?

Decisions, decisions, life's never easy as an MI commander.

Of course the bugs don't have it all their own way. Once they are on top of the cliff they still have to get to the communication bunker, giving the surviving MI time to rack up the body count some more. It proved at times to be a game of cat and mouse, the MI and bugs using the vegetation and trenches to move forward in cover, whilst trying to annihilate the other, without taking any casualties.

This was 8 foot x 4 foot with the MI allowed to set up anywhere on the cliff top, which was between 8 to 10 inches in height, having been

scratch built in the garage. The buildings were from a variety of different model suppliers along with the trees that were bought off e-bay and then based up by ourselves.

The bugs came in on one of the 4 ft ends of the table, the opposite end to the cliff, approaching out of the sea and taking the first turn. The top of the cliff where the MI deployed was covered in vegetation, ranging in height from small bushes to massive bunkers and defence platforms. Normally one or two of us would umpire and narrate the action whilst answering questions from bystanders and players.



The table

We actually ran the full game 3 times over a reunion weekend in August, with one or two players a side (each game lasting a maximum of 10 turns or approximately 3 hours, depending on when the Arachnids or MI won). The results of the 3 games were 1 clear Arachnid victory, 1 draw (less than 150 points difference) and 1 MI victory.

The best game, I think, was the second one with the game ending when one of the tanker bugs assaulted the communication bunker in an attempt to smash its way through its armoured walls. The bunker was already badly damaged, having been under fire from the plasma and tanker and close assaults by warriors and tankers.

The surviving MI on the roof continued to fire, despite warrior bugs climbing the walls, with the dieing shot from the MI missile launcher hitting the tanker, resulting in an explosion as it died. As the bug died it collapsed the remaining supports in armoury walls, resulting in an explosion that killed the few surviving troops on the roof. The ending is not that different from the episode of Roughnecks, where they blew the bunker after it had been overrun by Arachnid forces.

Forces comprised of 4 MI squads with a couple of M8 Apes for some extra fire support. The bugs had some 50 warriors, 9 hoppers, 2 tankers, 1 plasma bug and a load of cliff mites, making just less than 3,000 points a side.

We had very positive feedback on the rules system, which all players came to grips with quickly. The only alteration we made was in the reactive fire, where we gave players a count of 5 to decide on what the players were going to do (but only after they'd played a couple of turns, to get used to the rules). This kept the pace of the game fast; with the younger players enjoying the rapid turn round etc.

We are now thinking of taking this table to a few shows and see if others like it. It was certainly great fun to run. If you'd like more details, or to get in touch, then email us on dmuvents@yahoo.co.uk. Special thanks should go to Stuart Adams (who painted the MI force) and Sharon Jones (who painted all the Bugs, except the plasma (thanks to Jon Tarry)), thanks.

Force Organisations

Forces involved in the battle are listed below. We used a Priority Level 2 for each side with the MI having one force and the Arachnids having 2 forces. We decided to modify the normal missions to fit the scenario. So the MI had cross between delay and hold, with the bugs getting a cross between overrun and annihilate. This fitted the style of the game we wanted to reproduce

MI Forces

Alpha Team (6) – Sergeant (with engineering), corporal, 2 x missile launcher, grenades and shock sticks

Bravo Team (6) – Sergeant (with medical), corporal, 2 x missile launcher, grenades and shock sticks

Charlie Team (6) - Sergeant (with engineering), corporal, 2 x triple thud grenade launcher, grenades and shock sticks

Delta Team (8) – Sergeant (with armourer), corporal, grenades and shock sticks

Lieutenant Hero - Fast mover, jump ball player, true grit, grenades and shock stick

M8 Marauder Sergeant Reece - fast mover, stay frosty

M8 Marauder Sergeant Martin - dirty fighter, close combat expert, fast mover

Buildings and Assets

Communication bunker and ammo dump, outpost platform, extensive trench network, with 3 small dug out bunkers along with a couple of smaller firing platforms.

Arachnid Force

Plasma Bug	1
Tanker Bug	2
Hoppers	3 units of 3
Tunnel markers	8
Tunnel entrance	6
Warriors	10 units of 5
Cliff mites	14



The bunker



The MI defences

Know Your Enemy

By David McElhoe

Many wargames come down to the basic roll-off for mission, roll-off for deployment and roll-off for who goes first type of strategy. Starship Troopers is not one of those wargames. When creating an army list, there is more to it than simply how the units work. You need to know how they will function in any given mission, under any sort of tactics, and on any battlefield. In this article I will attempt to examine two often overlooked aspects of effective Starship Troopers play, namely Priority Level and Tactics.

Priority Level

Your Priority Level (PL) will determine what mission you will play against certain opponents, so you should always take this into account. Sure, lower PL's have the obvious advantage of starting readied, and getting to decide whether they can go first or second, but they also have the advantage of always being in a position where they do not have to move.

Light Armour Mobile Infantry (LAMI) armies and other stand-and-shoot armies benefit most from PL1 because mobility becomes less of an issue. They don't lose anything for having models left in their deployment zone, so they don't have to be concerned with having to charge forward later in the game. A PL2 LAMI list may look nice at first because of the additional options, but you should always weigh it against a PL1 list with an officer with

SICON training. It costs you 50 points and many feel that those points can be a waste because that's a chunk of your army that you are losing, but consider what you are gaining tactically. You always have at least a chance of going first, you can remain in your deployment zone without penalty, and in addition to having access to the same gear, you get more points for almost anything you do. Where a PL2 force vs. another PL2 force would give you Mission points equal to units killed, if you are PL1, you get DOUBLE mission points for everything killed and you get +25% points just for surviving. Therefore, if you kill just one 50 point squad of worker bugs, you've already made up for the 50 points that you spent on granting yourself access to PL2 gear. Of course, many of you have already figured this out...

What many Starship Troopers players have not yet figured out, however, is that this strategy can be countered. I have chosen to take a PL3 bug army that could easily have been PL2. Why? Because I understand that the Mobile Infantry will often choose PL1 in order to give themselves a huge advantage. However, PL3 vs. PL1 is a Last Stand for the MI, and the beauty of this is that I no longer care if I take casualties. This makes options such as Endless Tide much more appealing because the MI can kill a bug 100 times and never get a point for it. Not only in this situation does the MI lose their advantage of being able to get more Mission

points for everything they kill, but they are also forced to divide their forces. With an entire PL3 force vs. about half of an enemy army, the enemy is often caught off guard. Being so used to killing, he will often utilise his regular tactics, even though it will probably lead to a loss.

In conclusion, the best army list is not necessarily the one that can best crush the enemy, but rather, the best army list is the one that can best handle all three possible missions that the army will face. Consider the possible missions before you create your army. If your army has a lot of trouble with any single mission, then you may need to rethink your list.

Tactics

Once your army list is complete, this is the most important decision to be made. I cannot begin to explain how sorry I feel for players who simply tell the other player what tactics they will use, and then let their opponent decide accordingly. This is the only part of the game that is in no way affected by luck, so think hard about what you choose because it could win or lose the game for you.

If I take emplacement assets, I should take Defend, right? Wrong! There are plenty of times when it is more valuable to



Hopper bugs can influence how you deploy.

ditch the emplacements than to take them. Emplacement assets are the best way to make your opponent choose Probe tactics. If you are taking emplacement assets, chances are your enemy will want a short board so that he can take them out fast, so he'll choose Probe assuming that you will choose Defend so you can use your emplacements. However, if you fool him and choose Probe as well, your enemy is now forced to play an Encounter mission, and this alone can win you the game.

If for example, it is a PL2 bug force vs. a PL1 MI force, you can safely jump and shoot at the enemy until you reach the board edge, and his warrior bugs will have little chance of ever reaching you. By the end of the game, he probably won't be able to fit much in your deployment zone, you'll have killed much of his army, and you'll have had the whole board to spread out in. Sure, you wasted 100 points

or so of your army, but in the end, it will take him 4-5 turns to reach your lines instead of only 2-3 as in Battle Line. Are those 100 points of assets ever going to buy you two turns? I think not.

If you know your opponent's army list, then you should be able to reason what he tactics he is likely to take. For example, a bug army with a lot of hoppers will probably take Probe or Attack tactics. The

reason being that they make a juicy target on the board, and being able to hover onto the table allows them to have a good chance of ensuring that they can attack the enemy before they die. A clever MI player should pick this up. Let's say you have a PL1 MI army fielding a TAC Fighter with Ground Support (SICON training of course), and you are up against a bunch of hoppers. Here are the possibilities:

- 1) They choose Defend tactics and you will probably be able to shoot them on turn one.
- 2) They choose Attack tactics, in which case they will have at most one turn of attacks before the TAC fighter comes in to bomb them.
- 3) They choose Probe tactics, in which case they enter the board during turn one, and can potentially attack again on turn two before the TAC fighter

comes in to shoot them down. In any case, if they choose to fly on, they'll start off the board, so tactics won't affect this.

Which tactics should you choose in this case? The answer is: Probe. If they choose Defend, you will have a good shot at the hoppers on turn one. If they choose Attack, you can take out much of the enemy on turn one and then try to spread out so that the hoppers cannot come directly on to hurt you. If they choose Probe tactics, then you know they're coming onto the board on turn one, so they can hurt you right away. However, because you both chose Probe, it becomes an Encounter mission. Therefore, in order to hurt you, he either has to send his hoppers far in front of his lines to attack you, in which case you can tear them apart next turn (Encounter deployment zones make it impossible for him to reach you in one turn). Or he has to delay their advance, in which case, they are no problem until much later. Because your main objective is basically to survive and keep the enemy out of your deployment zone, an Encounter battle gives you a decided advantage. If the enemy chooses any other tactics, you have advantages as well, so almost no matter what your army list is, Probe is probably the right tactic to take against this army.

Choosing tactics isn't as simple as just what will help your army the most, it is also about what combination of tactics will hurt your enemy the most. Much of the time, you can hurt your enemy a lot more by choosing a tactic that you wouldn't normally take, than by taking one that you believe will help your army.



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The background of the image is a scene from the video game 'Battlefield Evolution'. It depicts a futuristic urban environment with advanced military technology. In the foreground, a soldier in a highly detailed, futuristic combat suit is aiming a large, futuristic rifle. Other soldiers in similar suits are visible in the background, some aiming their weapons. The scene is set in a city with modern buildings and a hazy, yellowish atmosphere. The text 'THE FUTURE OF WARGAMING IS ON ITS WAY' is overlaid in the center of the image in a large, bold, white font with a black outline.

**THE FUTURE OF
WARGAMING IS ON
ITS WAY**

Tactical Manual

The League of Non-Aligned Worlds

By Alan Oliver

The whole point of the league fleet is blending the correct ships together to make the whole greater than the sum of its parts. When it works, the results are excellent, however if it goes wrong, it will go spectacularly wrong. This is obviously easier with the complete fleet lists found in *A Sky Full of Stars*, however for now I shall contain myself to the ships in the basic set.

The limited fleet list in the basic set has some serious drawbacks that make them a challenging race to play. This is particularly true against certain races, the Minbari come particularly to mind as you lack several of the tools necessary to counter Minbari stealth. That isn't to say that you are automatically doomed, but you will have your work cut out for you.

Brakiri Syndicracy Fleet Strengths

The Brakiri are the big hitters of the league worlds. They have the three highest priority ships in the combined league fleet. Not only do they have the largest ships, but their ships are tough. The only one without a hull rating of 6 is the carrier, which still has a hull of five. What is more is that they have excellent damage ratings. In fact the Avioki heavy cruiser and the Brakador battle carrier both have higher damage ratings than any other ship at their priority. This makes the Brakiri ships strong on defence.

What makes them even stronger is that apart from their heavy cruiser they all carry interceptor systems as well. The heavy cruiser's lack of interceptors is a curious omission on their part, but is no doubt linked to their economic system in some way. The Avioki aside, these interceptors on top of the previously mentioned hull and damage ratings make the Brakiri ships difficult to kill.

The Brakiri have the only carrier in the basic league fleet with the Brokados battle carrier. The fact that it is a full fleet carrier makes it particularly potent for that role. However it is not intended to fight like in the same way as an EarthForce Avenger or Poseidon and hang back from combat. It is intended to fight alongside the heavy and advanced cruisers on the combat line, fighting more like an Omega heavy destroyer with advanced fighter capabilities. This is a role that it can perform respectably well, the only weakness being its relatively weak hull value of five.

The Brakiri have the only fighters available to the basic league fleet with the Falkosi fighter. The Falkosi is an assault fighter, not particularly well suited to dealing with other races fighters, having a poor dogfight rating. However its single weapon is armour piercing, making it a threat to even large ships. In addition it is also the fastest fighter around, enabling it to strike at enemy targets that your opponent thought were safely out of range.

All the Brakiri ships mount gravitic bolt weapons, which are very well suited to shooting down the fighters of other races. In addition these weapons are sensibly mounted in turrets to provide good all round protection. This enables the Brokados to send its fighters off to attack enemy ships knowing that it and the other Brakiri ships have good protection from enemy fighters.



Avioki heavy cruiser

Apart from the Vree battle saucer the Brakiri are the only league ships that carry their own jump engines. All of the Brakiri battle and war priority ships have their own jump engines, making them suitable core ships for league fleets, providing the fleets jump capability.

Lastly, and this is just personal opinion of course, the Brakiri ships look very good. Particularly the Avioki heavy cruiser and Brokadados battle carrier. A line of these ships sweeping across the table is bound to impress.

Brakiri Syndicracy Fleet Weaknesses

While the heavy beam weapons on the larger Brakiri ships are among the most potent such weapons in the league fleet, they are still inferior to those of other races. That is not to say that they don't have some advantages, the sheer number of attack dice on the Avioki heavy cruiser and Tashkat advanced cruiser make these weapons respectable. However they have several drawbacks. Firstly most of these weapons lack decent armour penetration, and when dealing with ships of similar priority, needing to roll 5 or higher with the Tashkat, or sixes with the Avioki on the first roll with the main beam weapon is a real flaw. Secondly these weapons are slow loading, which means you've got to make the shot count when you get the chance. For both these reasons I would seriously recommend concentrate all firepower special action when intending to fire these main weapons. This will nearly double the number of hits that you will achieve in the first dice roll.

The older Brakiri ships, basically everything apart from the Tashkat advanced cruiser, are slow and lumbering ships that lack the agility for precision flying. This is not a radical flaw in the larger ships, as those of other races are rarely nimble in the higher priorities either, but it does mean you will have to work for your shot, especially as you will need to be lined up on the target on the turn before you intend to fire your main weapons, so that you can 'concentrate all fire'.

Drazi Freehold Fleet Strengths

The first strength of the Drazi fleet is best put by the description of them as 'ants with bazookas'. Individual Drazi ships are small and despite their strengths can be killed fairly easily. However the weaponry on them

is definitely disproportionate to their size. Their forward firepower is impressive, easily equal to a ship of the next higher priority, possibly more.

In low priority battles, the Drazi will be up against ships as small as they are, who will have weaker hull scores and less firepower, which gives the Drazi all the advantages. When the priorities get higher, the Drazi have to attack in numbers, massing ships into squadrons and attacking particularly big targets with several squadrons at the same time. Although enemy battle and war priority ships are likely to be able to kill a Sunhawk or Warbird with one shot, this still leaves their mates to avenge them.

Drazi ships are generally as fast as anything else in the fleets of their enemies, however this is almost to be expected in Patrol and Skirmish priority ships, so while a strength, it's not an unexpected one.

Drazi ships generally have a slight range advantage against most other ships of the same priority level. However this range advantage is small and the chances of taking advantage of it regularly are going to be slim. However it may give you a turn of unanswered fire as you close if you can finesse the range by moving after your opponent. Look for the opportunity if it occurs, but don't pin your whole plan on this.

Drazi Fleet Weaknesses

While their forward firepower is impressive, their flank and rear firepower is, well, missing. Somebody obviously sneaked in to their ship design workshops and stole it from the plans. No race intelligent enough to have made it into space would deliberately leave their ships with no weapons across 75% of space, would they?

Well the Drazi do. This makes them an interesting race to fight with, rather like riding a powerful motorbike along high mountain roads at high speeds. Definite adrenaline high, but one mistake and your spam.

This lack of flank and rear weapons makes them vulnerable to assault fighters of other races. As agile as they may be, fighters are naturally more agile and will always position



Warbird cruiser

themselves outside of the Drazi forward arcs, keeping themselves safe from the anti fighter weapons carried on both Drazi ships. If other league races are around to cover the Drazi ships then you'll be safe, however this would tie you to slower moving ships of other races. Instead pair a Sunhawk battlecruiser with each Warbird cruiser to operate as wing man and anti fighter cover. The ships operate at the same speed for a reason. Have the Sun hawk follow closely behind the Warbird, so that any fighter attempting to do an attack run on the Warbird will face the Sunhawk's particle beams.

Limited technology is another weakness of the Drazi fleet, although this may be as much about the size of the Drazi ships as it is about the lack of technology in Drazi space. Currently no Drazi ship is capable of making its own jump point, meaning that Drazi forces must rely either upon the actions of others or the local jump gates.

Vree Trading Guild Fleet Strengths

The first and most obvious strength of the Vree ships available is their extreme agility. For example the Xorr war saucer is the only skirmish priority ship available to any fleet that is capable of twice turning by ninety degrees. Even the raid priority Xill battle saucer ranks alongside the Vorlon destroyer and is only out performed by the legendary white star fleet of the Interstellar Alliance. This enables both ships to spin and cut through the league fleet to get to where they are needed. This is coupled with main weapons that are turret mounted, so the current facing of the ship is less important, allowing the Vree ships to move more freely.



Xorr war saucer

The Vree fleet mounts all round antiproton guns on all their ships. This gives them attack dice in all directions that can sweep fighters from

the skies. The antiproton guns are excellent anti fighter weapons, not only having that essential anti-fighter trait but also being twin linked. As these weapons are spread around the firing arcs, this means that they are most effective when they actively hunt fighters, and get in among them to get more batteries into action.

The Vree battle saucer is the only raid priority ship in the league fleet that has jump engines, as well as the only Vree ship with them. It is also the smallest ship in the league fleet with jump engines, meaning that in low priority battles it is very likely to be present.

Vree Trading Guild Fleet Weaknesses

The first problem with the Vree ships is that their main heavy weapons are not beam weapons. This makes them less effective against enemy ships with interceptors. On the positive side they have excellent armour penetration, which is not found in the heavy weapons of the Brakiri for example. While the good armour penetration will give them a good chance of doing some damage, one of the weapons lacks any kind of damage modifier, so is likely to do a little damage, but isn't a ship killer. At skirmish priority this is not a massive drawback, however it makes the Xorr less effective than it could be.

The Vree ships are not a complete fleet, obviously, as they only have skirmish and raid priority ships. They lack the heavy firepower to make the backbone of a fleet even at these priorities. While they should never be the majority of the league fleet, they always have a place there providing exceptional fighter protection.

The Vree ships are not tough, in fact they could be described as fragile ships. They have weak defences on three levels. Firstly they have below average hull values, the Xorr battle saucer has a deplorable hull value of 4. There are other skirmish ships with a hull value of 4, however all of them have advanced defences, either stealth on the Minbari and the Narn scout, interceptors on the EarthForce Olympus Corvette, adaptive armour on the Vorlon transport and dodge on the Centauri Kutai gunship. This makes the Xorr battle saucer the weakest Skirmish ship out there. The Xill is better off, but it only has an average hull value itself.

Secondly the damage ratings on the Vree ships are certainly not impressive. They are not quite the weakest ships in damage terms, but are certainly not among the strongest.

Thirdly they have none of the advanced defences used by other fleets. They have no stealth or interceptors, which other fleets that are otherwise fragile typically have to protect their ships.

This makes the Vree ships easy kills for the enemy, and if they had lethal firepower they would have very short life expectancy. Fortunately unless assault fighters are a key part of your enemies plan, the Vree ships are unlikely to be their first target.

Abbai Matriarchy Fleet Strengths

The Abbai attitude to the universe can be clearly seen in their ship designs. They are the opposite of the Drazi in one respect. If the Drazi are 'ants with bazookas' then the Abbai are 'elephants with water pistols'. Defences are the most important part of an Abbai warship, with weapons seen as a secondary system.



Abbai Matriarchy fleet

Heavy interceptor banks provide the first layer of defence. The two Abbai ships in the combined fleet both carry as many or more interceptors as any other ship at their priority. As interceptors are most effective against opportunity fire rather than concentrated fire from many ships, this protection works very well on the Abbai ships. This is because the Abbai ships do not carry the heavy weapons that make other ships targets of necessity, so concentrated fire is less likely. The heavy banks of interceptors also make opportunity fire less likely, as an enemy captain will know that an Abbai ship that has taken no fire will be able to negate much of his ships firepower, so it will be wasted. Instead he'll target the Vree saucer next to the Abbai and blow that up instead.

The second layer of defence is in the form of respectable hull ratings. Now at patrol priority there is only the one hull rating, so the hull four on the Tiraca attack frigate is nothing to be ashamed of. The Bimith defender has a hull of five, which for a raid priority ship is solid if not superior.

The third layer of defence is the high damage and crew ratings on Abbai ships. At patrol priority they have the largest ship in terms of damage and crew, nearly double that of any other patrol ship. The Bimith is comparable with the Narn ships which are universally regarded as the toughest ships around.

These three layers of defence make the Abbai ships very enduring. But there is one other factor that also helps to keep the Abbai captains alive, although this is a weakness on the Abbai ships. Because of the firepower on Abbai ships many captains do not consider them worth firing at. Considering the massive amounts of firepower that have to be put into an Abbai ship to kill it, the amount of firepower this will remove from the league fleet is minimal. Therefore many if not all enemy captains will ignore the Abbai ships in favour of killing those who they perceive as being able to hurt them. This is a mistake, but one that the Abbai are happy to take advantage of.

Abbai Matriarchy Fleet Weaknesses

As you might have already gathered, the Abbai fleet lacks firepower. While the quad particle array carried by Abbai ships is an effective secondary weapon, comparable to the particle weapons found on many other ships, other races have primary weapons on their ships, where the Abbai do not.

It is true that the banks of quad particle array carried by the Bimith defender rival those on other races war priority ships, and this massive number of attack dice does have advantages. For example there isn't a ship out there whose interceptor network won't be overloaded after taking a full broadside from a Bimith defender, which opens the door for other league ships with more powerful non-beam weapons to strike, such as the antimatter shredders of the Vree.

Even against the Minbari, the massive numbers of weapons means that a Bimith defender that has made it in among the Minbari fleet will be able to put significant amounts of attack dice into a number of different ships, hopefully bypassing the stealth on one or two of them to get a solid lock on.

Another weakness with the Abbai ships is that neither ship has jump engines. This means that they will have to rely upon other ships of the league to provide for jump capability.

A third weakness with Abbai ships is their speed and agility. Their ships are neither the fastest nor the most agile in space. They are not as slow and lumbering as some, but do come in the lower ranks on both speed and agility. The Abbai Tiraca attack frigate is the slowest patrol priority ship out there while the Bimith defender is as agile as a war priority ship. Fortunately both these weaknesses are not combined in a single ship. Also the Bimith is designed to get in among the enemy, which is easier to do than trying to fly around and find a blind spot.

Patrol Priority Options

Two options at this priority, three if you include wings of Falkosi fighters. The two ships are the Drazi Sunhawk battlecruiser and the Abbai Tiraca attack frigate.

The Drazi Sunhawk has a couple of things going for it, speed and decent forward firepower including anti fighter weapons. On the speed front it's as fast as any other patrol ship out there, and faster than the Abbai Tiraca. It is also the same speed as the larger Warbird, allowing the two ships to work together easily. It has twice the beam firepower of the Tiraca, however it is limited to bore sight arc, and the problem with patrol priority ships is that they are always the smallest ships in the fleet, so are likely to move early, which could deny them a target for their main weapon. As has previously been mentioned, one use for them is as wingmen for the larger Warbird.

The Abbai Tiraca attack frigate is definitely the more warlike of the Abbai ships, mounting a combat laser that is powerful for its size. The advantages of the Tiraca are the toughness of the design and the wide spread of quad particle arrays. It's slower than the Drazi battlecruiser, but still fast and agile enough to pick its ground. The combat laser has two advantages, a full forward firing arc and the precise trait. With only the single attack dice, it has to hope for a lucky critical hit that will disable the enemy, or at least do damage beyond normal expectations. The Precise trait certainly helps get those criticals.

Both ships have their place in the line. In Patrol priority games the Tiraca looks good, its strong defences will mean it will survive long enough to get the lucky hits with the combat laser. At higher priorities then squadrons of Sunhawk battlecruisers start to look appealing. Their smaller size will matter less as there will be more important targets out there, and their concentrated weapons will be less of a problem when performing attack runs on larger ships. Also they may be required to act as wingmen to Warbirds.

There is always the option of taking a wing of Falkosi fighters. For a start they are cheap, you get four flights of Falkosi as a single patrol option. With their speed they are capable of lurking away from the fighting and still be within range to jump a ship that's made itself vulnerable to fighter attack. As the fastest fighters yet seen, this is an advantage you should look to use. If possible outdistance enemy fighters to choose your own battleground. Weaknesses are a low hull rating and little dog-fighting capability, but they do carry light gravitic bolts, which have good armour penetration. This places them definitely in the assault fighter class. However this is not an option to take against an enemy with good fighter defences as your impressive fighter wing can quickly become unimpressive scrap.

Skirmish Priority Options

You have three options at this priority, the Brakiri Ikorta light assault cruiser, the Drazi Warbird cruiser and the Vree Xorr war saucer.

The Brakiri Ikorta light assault cruiser is a tough, solid ship mounting interceptors to augment its tough design. It has all round weaponry supporting its main weapon, the grav cannon, which has respectable range, good armour penetration and precise damage. It also carries a useful turret

mounted gravitic bolt for anti fighter protection. Weaknesses are poor speed and agility for a skirmish ship.

The Drazi Warbird cruiser is the heaviest Drazi ship to be seen in the general fleets. It has good speed, an excellent hull rating unseen among other races skirmish ships, better even than the Narn ships. It mounts a useful beam weapon although limited to bore sight. However it still has no flank or rear mounted weapons, needing a Sunhawk battlecruiser wingman to protect it from fighters.

The Vree Xorr war saucer is incredibly agile, and carries the all round anti fighter weapons common to the Vree ships. It is however extremely fragile, with unimpressive damage and crew ratings, and a terrible hull rating of four. This relegates the Xorr to escort duties for larger ships rather than being the core ship of lower priority fleets.

At low priorities if looking for a skirmish ship to be the core of a small fleet, then the Ikorta light assault cruiser is probably the best choice, as it offers a solid core to a skirmish or patrol fleet.

At higher priorities the Drazi becomes the ship of choice, used in numbers with Sunhawks in support they will be able to inflict significant damage in high speed passes against the enemy. The Vree Xorr war saucers make for good escort vessels for larger ships that feel they need greater anti fighter protection.

Alternatively they can be used as a cheap fighter killer option, possibly against the Minbari who have particularly dangerous fighters.

Raid Priority Options

Only two options at this priority, the Abbai Bimith defender and the Vree Xill battle saucer.

The Abbai Bimith defender is a classic Abbai ship. Very tough and difficult to kill unless high priority beam weapons are directed against it, it can otherwise absorb a lot of damage while still fighting. When it gets in close

to the enemy it can unleash a great deal of firepower. This firepower is dangerous to fighters, even if not anti fighter. Speed and agility are not good on the defender.

The Vree Xill battle saucer definitely has the agility advantage, being up there with the most agile ships in the galaxy. It's speed however is not so impressive, not standing out from the rest of the crop of Raid priority ships. It does have jump engines which make it more useful to have around. Its main weapons are ideal for targeting ships with particularly high hull ratings, being the only super armour piercing weapons in the league combined fleet apart from the bore sight beam weapons of the Drazi. In addition the Xill has its main weapons mounted in turrets so that it's facing doesn't matter. This makes it a very useful weapon in high priority battles, where it can pick off crippled

enemies that have lost their advanced defences and finish them off, where ever the battle has moved to.

The choice between these two ships is more difficult, and will greatly depend on who and what you are fighting. At skirmish and patrol priorities, the defences and toughness of the Abbai will keep it virtually invulnerable. At higher priorities the Xill's firepower and anti fighter weapons will make it more useful, as will its jump engines. These two ships actually compliment each other well, so in many cases an even split of Bimith defenders and Xill battle saucers will be the best answer.



Battle Priority Options

Only two options at this priority which are both Brakiri ships, the Avioki heavy cruiser and the Brakados battle carrier.

The Avioki heavy cruiser is a tough ship, even without the interceptors it has a maximum hull rating and the best damage and crew ratings around. It isn't fast however, and has the turning circle of a pregnant hippo. Weapons are fairly good although the main beam weapon has terrible armour penetration properties for a beam weapon. The secondary weapons do have the armour penetration, but are not beam weapons. In addition it has a cluster of gravitic

bolts mounted in turrets to handle any fighter threats. This ship will be difficult to kill, and is more likely to be rendered combat ineffective due to critical damage than it is to be destroyed

The Brakados battle carrier is not like the carriers in EarthForce or the Minbari fleets that have to skulk around at the fringes of the battle. The Brakados is intended to fly alongside the Avioki heavy cruiser and provide additional firepower as well as advanced carrier support. Fortunately its speed matches that of the Avioki, allowing them to operate together easily. My personal recommendation would be two Avioki and a Brakados in a single squadron. Two or three of these squadrons around and things should start to look promising for the Brakiri.

War Priority Options

Like many other races you only have the one option at war priority, the Brakiri Tashkat advanced cruiser, and as you would expect, it's a powerful ship. It definitely places the Brakiri among the big powers in the league. Good points start with the speed and agility of the Tashkat, which is more typical of a raid priority ship than a war ship. In fact it can turn tighter than any other ship at this priority, other than the Shadows, and it's best not to think about them. Next come the defences, and here the Brakiri have really done a good job. It has all three layers, firstly it has a massive bank of interceptors capable of stopping a lot of incoming fire. In fact the only ship with a larger array of interceptors is the EarthForce Poseidon super carrier. Secondly it has a hull rating of six, which means that weapons without armour penetration will be hard pressed to damage the Tashkat. Thirdly the damage and crew ratings for the ship rival those on the Narn Bin'Tak dreadnought. Together these three factors make this a very tough ship to take down. Its main vulnerability would be to a massed alpha strike, or to repeated hits from beam weapons.

And the fun doesn't stop there. On the weapons front you have a pair of gravitic shifters, which although only short range can prove devastating, particularly against ships that have to rely upon bore sight weaponry. Imagine the look on the face of the Narn captain when your Tashkat flies straight down his throat, but just before he can fire his massive array of bore sight weaponry, you turn his ship off course and his weapons carve up empty space. Impressive as these weapons are, they will be even better when Brakiri scientists figure out how to use them on friendly ships. The fun of the gravitic shifters aside, the ship has a potent main weapon in the graviton beam, which although a little short ranged for a war priority

ship still packs an impressive amount of dice, as well as having the armour penetration you would expect from a war ship's main weapon. Backing this up are large batteries of graviton pulsars, which are good for shredding ships. Lastly the ship is self escorting against fighter attacks, having a large battery of anti-fighter gravitic bolts mounted in turrets.

All round this is a very good ship, and definitely a sign of things to come when the Brakiri navy is brought up to date.

Enemies of the League of Non-Aligned Worlds

Given the violent nature of the Drazi, and the sharp practice that typifies the business dealings of the Vree and Brakiri, it is inevitable that a league admiral will eventually have to lead their fleet into battle. So let's look at who you might be facing.

The Centauri Republic

Centauri fleet operates interceptors on many of its ships, so as with the EarthForce you will either have to go with predominantly beam weapon fleets or massed firepower to burn out the interceptors before your big guns fire.

The Centauri main weapon is the battle laser, which is very effective and ignores interceptors, making the Abbai ships vulnerable. Instead you need to select high hull rating ships, which puts the ball firmly in the Brakiri and Drazi courts for dealing with the Centauri.

The Centauri operate a pure superiority fighter from their ships and carriers. If you have no Falkosi for the Sentri to dogfight and slaughter, they will be reduced to suicidal attack runs on your ships, where they will be killed easily. This makes them of little significance to the battle. This will mean the Brakados sitting out the battle, however the Falkosi are no match for the Sentri fighters, so would die quickly in any case.

At low priority battles the fleet is likely to be a mix of Drazi cruisers of both sizes, some Brakiri light assault cruisers and perhaps a Vree battle saucer in command, if for no other reason than to give the fleet access to hyperspace.

At high priorities, you will obviously be relying on the Brakiri fleet, especially the Tashket advanced cruiser and Avioki heavy cruiser for the bulk of your fleet. Two or three Xill battle saucers would be a welcome addition, providing anti fighter support and the firepower to finish off crippled Centauri ships that have lost their interceptors.

The Earth Alliance

With the common use of interceptors on most EarthForce ships the firepower of a league fleet will be diluted to some extent. At low priority the Drazi and the Abbai Tiraca have beam weapons that will cut through the EarthForce interceptors. At high priority selecting a strong Brakiri presence for the same reasons will work. At medium priorities you will need a different approach, and massed Abbai Bimith defenders working with Vree battle saucers may provide the answer. The Bimith overloads the interceptors with massed Quad particle array fire, leaving the ships open to antimatter shredding by the Vree.

EarthForce fighters will be a problem on two levels. Firstly the Starfury is a better dogfighter than the Falkosi, and will be around in much greater numbers in a typical fleet exchange. However your fighters aren't there to engage his fighters but to attack his ships, so move round them if you can and start attacking his ships were possible. This leaves his Starfuries free to come in with the Thunderbolts and attack your ships. This is a good thing, and exactly where you want them. The league fleet has some of the best anti-fighter defences of any fleet out there, possibly even rivalling the Minbari for their effectiveness. So lure the fighters in with the departure of your Falkosi, then rip them apart with the gravitic bolts of the Brakiri and the antiproton guns of the Vree. They shouldn't survive for long against firepower of that magnitude.

EarthForce heavy ships need to get bore sight weapons in arc to do the most damage, the Omega destroyer is the most common to suffer from this problem. The Brakiri Avioki heavy cruiser is an ideal ship to take it on the chin if you can't otherwise avoid giving him a shot with one weapon or another. The only ships that you need bore sight for are the Drazi, which at higher priorities are unlikely to be a major factor in the plan.

At low battle priorities the league should be mainly Drazi, with some Vree and Abbai thrown in. The Drazi make up the bulk of the fleet and should be capable of ripping up patrol and skirmish ships easily. A couple of Vree Xorr war saucers should provide good anti fighter protection, while an

Abbai Tiraca attack frigate will provide some backbone as well as a ship for picking off hardened targets.

At medium battle priorities a mix of Abbai Bimith defenders with Vree Xill battle saucers should make up the bulk of the fleet. One or two points can be spent on Drazi for a rapid flank strike force. If a large enough fleet is in use, then it could be commanded by a Brakados battle carrier, which would make for an excellent flagship to lead the Abbai into the heart of the enemy.

At high priorities, one or two Avioki/Brakados squadrons should be the core of your fleet. These should be led by a Tashkat advanced cruiser if possible, maybe two. In addition the force should have about 20% spent on Vree Xill battle saucers. The Brakiri anti fighter weapons alone will not be able to handle the massive numbers of fighters that a large EarthForce fleet can bring to bear, and additional source of anti fighter firepower is always useful. In addition the antimatter shredders make great weapons for finishing off crippled EarthForce ships that have lost their interceptors.

The Narn Regime

This is a good match for the league, as many of the strengths of the Narn Regime are less significant against the league than they are against other enemies.

Narn defences are based on tough ship designs, high damage ratings rather than stealth or interceptors. This makes the massed firepower of ships like the Abbai Bimith defender especially useful. It also means that the slow loading heavy weapons of the Brakiri might actually have a decent chance of hitting their target and doing significant damage.

Narn energy mines are the best fighter killer in the galaxy, without any question. There is a simple answer to this, don't use fighters. Leave the Brakados in the hanger, bring no spare wings along, and leave the energy mine with little to fire at. The only ships that might prove vulnerable to them are the Drazi Sunhawks, if caught in several blasts they might actually be seriously damaged if not destroyed.

The Narn fighter, the Frazi, is an assault fighter like your own Falkosi, which means it will have to come to you. All the large and powerful Brakiri ships have all round anti-fighter firepower, and the Vree saucers will be providing additional protection. Simply wait for the Frazi to come to you.

Don't send small squadrons of Sunhawks or Warbirds off to do flank attacks on the Narn capital ships. They have enough heavy flank firepower that they could easily destroy a Sunhawk or cripple a warbird in one volley.

As with the EarthForce fleet they operate their main beam weapons on bore sights, which means that some of their firepower can be avoided.

At low priorities the Ikorta light assault cruiser will make a good core ship, supported by Drazi attack squadrons and one or two Vree Xorr war saucers, both to handle the few Frazi coming your way, and to damage enemy ships with antimatter cannon. Commanding these with an Abbai Bimith defender will be good if the points can be spared. It will be fairly immune to enemy fire, and its Quad particle arrays will actually be effective against the Narn ships.

At high priorities avoid the Drazi, as their small ships will be vulnerable to massed energy mine fire. Core of the fleet will be Avioki heavy cruisers, supported by Bimith defenders and Xill battle saucers. If a large enough force is available then a Tashkat advanced cruiser to command would be advisable. Leave the Brakados in the hanger, the fighters won't stand a chance of getting close.

The Minbari Federation

OK, it's been said before, it will be said again, you're in trouble now.

Virtually all Minbari weapons are beam or mini-beam, so the interceptors on your Brakiri and Abbai ships will be of no use whatever. As the Abbai ships have lower hull ratings than the Brakiri, mainly because they are smaller, this makes the Abbai very unsuited for this mission.

All the Minbari ships have stealth, which means you need to select ships to counter this. Top of that list are the fleet scouts, but unfortunately somebody left the league scouts from the fleet list, so you will have to do without them. The second option is to send in fighters to reduce the stealth on the target by redirecting fire. However you only have one source of fighters, which is the Brakados battle carrier, and it only carries four flights. This means that you will have to pick and chose which ships you spend your fighters on targeting, as they are unlikely to come back. The third option is to simply close the range to the target, which at least negates the bonus to stealth that comes from a long range engagement.

Neutron lasers will gut low hull rating ships in seconds, so at medium and above battle priorities you should go for high hull value ships over any other defences. In particular the Vree ships are vulnerable to this sort of sudden death, having both weak hulls and low damage ratings they can easily be picked off with a single shot from a Sharlin. Brakiri ships and Drazi Warbirds will make the best ships to use against the Minbari.

Obviously the traditional approach of trying to keep the battle priority low and out of the Minbari comfort zone is valid. You have some potent ships in the low priorities, make the most of them.

Multiple Drazi ships are better than a single Brakiri ship, as they will have more shots to try and get a lock on to the target through the Minbari stealth. Brakiri slow loading beam weapons are particularly vulnerable to stealth, but if they do hit they should at least cause significant damage. Don't fire your slow loading weapons at ranges where the Minbari stealth will be most effective, instead get in close as quickly as possible and open up. However massed packs of Drazi ships are still likely to cause the Minbari more trouble.

Minbari fighters are deadly, and your Falkosi will be little protection against Nial heavy fighters. Instead you will need Vree saucers to kill fighters, however keep them away from the main Minbari fleet, as a Vree saucer would make a nice snack for a Sharlin war cruiser.

Conclusion

This is a fleet of variables. You might put together the perfect fleet for one battle against a particular enemy, and do very well. The next time you get lazy and take the same fleet out against a different enemy, and suddenly wonder what happened when you get your head handed to you. You must look at the variables for each battle. Who you are fighting, what priority is the battle set to, what are the objectives of the battle. All these things must be born in mind when selecting a league fleet. Unlike most other fleets, there are no no-brainer obvious choices.

However this is also a strength of the league fleet. Your enemy will not have any idea what technology he will be up against, depending on which of the four races you've chosen, so will not be able to plan specifically for one or another. Obviously some things are predictable, such as the Brakiri ships in a high priority battle, however at high priorities nobody has that much choice.

RECRUITS SQUAD

A NEW UNIT FOR DESPERATE MI COMMANDERS

by Matthew Sprange

Though the training of the light armour troopers within the Invasion Companies is often seen as a joke by the rest of the Mobile Infantry, the process is actually much maligned – it just proved inadequate on Klendathu. However, there have been cases when troopers have been thrown into battle with their training not yet complete, pitched into the heat of battle while barely knowing which way to hold the Morita. This is never undertaken lightly and has only happened on training outposts based upon the more remote colonies that have found themselves under sudden attack and in need of every rifle available. Led by a veteran sergeant, these young men and women are thrown into the War of the Species with little to no preparation.

A Light Armour platoon may replace any light armour squad with a recruits squad for –35 points.



Type	Value	Size	Move	Close Combat	Target	Save	Kill	Traits
Recruit	5	1	4"	D6-1	3+	6+	5+	
Recruit Squad Leader	15	1	4"	D6-1	3+	6+	5+	
Light Armour Sergeant	50	1	4"	D6-1	3+	6+/6+	5+	

Unit Size: Every recruits squad consists of one veteran sergeant (unit leader) and seven recruits.

Weapons/Equipment: Morita assault rifle and underslung G/L. Only the Flechette Grenade may be used with the underslung G/L.

Special Rules

Recruit squads are subject to the following special rules.

Condensed Training: All Morita assault rifles lose their Auto trait.

Poor Morale: If the veteran sergeant is killed, roll a dice. If a 1 or 2 is scored, the recruits squad will immediately take one Move action directly away from the nearest enemy, and will continue taking Move actions directly away from the nearest enemy for the rest of the game. Even if the recruits squad stands firm, this test must be taken as soon as an enemy unit moves within 10" (before reactions). If a squad leader is present, this test will only be failed on the roll of a 1.

Split Firing: A recruit squad containing only a veteran sergeant may not split fire. A recruit squad containing both a veteran sergeant and a squad leader may split fire into two fire zones. An officer joining a recruit squad allows the creation of an extra fire zone.

Veteran Sergeant: The veteran sergeant must be purchased at least one trait.

Unit Options

Recruits squads may purchase the following options.

Squad Leader: One recruit may be promoted to squad leader for +10 points. If the veteran sergeant is killed, the squad leader automatically becomes the unit leader.

Go Career: The veteran sergeant may be bought heroic traits up to a total value of +35 points.

Unit Options: Up to 12 extra recruits may be added to the squad for +5 points each.

STARSHIP TROOPERS

EXTINCTION PROTOCOL 1.1 BAD DAY ON BLACK GLASS

WRITTEN BY: CY DETHAM
ART BY: NIC WILKINSON



YATES AND TOZIER - DROP THE PACKAGE AND COVER FOR THREATS.

BOWDEN, GET THAT CAPSULE OFF OF BLACKWELL BEFORE IT MELTS THE POOR BASTARD

MAXWELL, RAMART, NAKAGAWA - FIND HARD COVER AND DIG IN.



SIT TIGHT, CORPORAL. DADDY'S GOT TO GO TO WORK.

BRING ME BACK SOMETHING NICE...



LT! INCOMING PLASMA!

DAMN IT!



COULD'VE BEEN WILDFIRE, BOSS. CAN'T SEE 'EM WASTING A RANGING SHOT ON MUD-GRUNTS.

NOT LIKELY, SERGEANT. SMELLS MORE LIKE MISDIRECTION TO ME. WE'RE ABOUT TO HAVE COMPANY.

SILVERBACKS, HIT THAT CRATER AND BITE DOWN HARD. THIS PLACE CRAWLS!



EYES ON, PEOPLE. COVER YOUR PARTNERS.



BOWDEN, CRACK THAT CAPSULE. WE NEED ALL GUNS UP FRONT HERE.

GOT IT.



WELL NOW, CORPORAL, WHAT SEEMS TO BE THE TROUBLE HERE?

PRIVATE, I'D HAVE TO SAY MY CHIEF COMPLAINT IS THAT I'M STUCK IN THIS PISSING CAPSULE!



OTHER THAN THAT, NO PROBLEMS.



SUCK IT DOWN, BITCH! YOU WANNA EAT ME? COME ON IN AND EAT ME, YOU GRUESOME FAGGOT BASTARDS!



NICE OF YOU TO JOIN US, CORPORAL.

HERE THEY COME!



BIG NUMBERS HERE, BOSS!



STORY OF MY LIFE PRIVATE. MORE BUGS THAN BULLETS

CONTROL YOUR FIRE, PEOPLE. THIS IS A RESCUE MISSION. WE CAN'T GET BOGGED DOWN HERE.



LIGHT 'EM UP, TROOPERS!



UFF-- SON OF A BITCH!



TO HELL WITH THIS. I'M
THROWING UP A FIREWALL.

MARAUDERS, PROVIDE COVER.
BLACKWELL, YOU'RE WITH ME



SET A HALF-SECOND
SQUIRT ON YOUR JETS
AND KEEP 'EM OFF ME SO
I CAN PREP THIS BURST.



YES, SIR...

LONG ODDS ON THIS ONE, LT.



WHAT WERE YOU HOPING
FOR, SON - CANCER?

LET'S GO



GAH!

OKAY, HIT IT!



BOWDEN, DIAL FLEET
AND FIND OUT WHERE OUR
AIR COVER IS. RAMART AND
MAXWELL, FIND ME WHAT
WE CAME HERE FOR.

Monty's Modification Module: 'Thumbing a ride' with the Mobile Infantry

Modifying a toy vehicle for use as an APC for the Starship Troopers Miniatures Game

By Darell C. Phillips

The main method of transport for the Mobile Infantry is primarily "Boots on the ground", due to the efficiency of Drop Capsules and Powered Armour. Light Armour Troopers have the support of Vikings and Slingshots to get them where they are needed in quantity. Exosuit squads and Pathfinders would tell you they would need vehicular transport only when they were dead, and in body bags. In some cases and for special missions however, wheeled transport is necessary for retrieval of a captured enemy unit or when the enemy has overwhelming air-superiority over a target location and ground forces need to quickly move forces in laterally.

There are basic rules in the main rulebook that cover special movement for vehicles ("Wheels/X"), as well as descriptions for vehicles in the role-playing game version that could be used in the tactical game such as the GK-12 Gecko. While the RPG Gecko is an eight-wheeled



GK-6 Mini-Gecko

APC capable of transporting 12 troopers, the variant I will show you how to build is inspired from the six-wheeled APC from the Roughnecks: Starship Troopers Chronicles series. I'll define this as a cut-down version of the GK-12 that we will call a "GK-6", or "Mini-Gecko". The stats could be as follows:

GK-6 Mini-Gecko Armoured Personnel Carrier

Medium Hard-armoured surface vehicle; DV: 8; CC: 1 driver, 1 backup driver / navigator, 1 external position for non-permanent mounting of a Micro Support Weapon Platform for additional defence, 6 passengers; Chassis: 60 hp; Wheels: 7 hp; Crew: 8 hp; DR: Chassis 6, crew 4, Wheels (6) 4; Spd: 250; Acc/Dec: 12/12; Han: +1; Cargo: 1,000 lb.; Weapons: none, but external MSWP position provided; Equipment: Geosynchronous Location Sensor, Surface Surveillance Radar, Homing Sensor; Weight: 18 tons.

Now let me show you a method to modify something that would work for a smaller squad-level transport for RPG use or special Wargamer scenarios. First, I needed a basic toy design that resembles the vehicle chassis in the Roughnecks: STC series. I found one of these rather easily on E-bay. It is made by Matchbox as is called a "Mega-Rig Powered Space Base." Besides the desired vehicle I acquired to modify into the APC, included in the box are an entire collection of pieces that can be used for atmospheric entry spaceship escape pods and missile cylinders as cargo containers or even oh, missile cylinders! The kit can be found for around \$20.00 US +/- (depending on how many read this article and bid against each other- doh! (heh).



Darell's EBay find!

Remarkably, the vehicle included in the toy set has a striking resemblance to the APC in the computer animated series and only needs slight changes. The cab and wheel/chassis layout are very similar to the series' APC, so most of the conversion work is going to be in the cargo area of



Construction begins!

the vehicle. A real shortcut can be used if you procure a Tehnolog kit of Hexagon pieces. Most reading this already know of what I speak. In the UK these can be sourced from Urban Mammoth, and in the US ask your FLGS to ask their supplier for a distributor by the name of Pegasus Hobbies, which is the sole-distributor in the Americas (both north and south). As you can reference from the included photos, I fashioned a cargo/crew area from Hexagon panels, and used the included clips to attach the panels to each other. The proportional height of the box I made could be justified by the need of the troopers to stand inside while allowing for good vehicle ground clearance in the various environments the APC would be expected to see. Since it is not an aircraft, it doesn't have to be aerodynamically streamlined to do its job. I suppose one could look at it as a lightly-armoured mobile bunker; A real home away from home.

The model has option "sockets" for attaching various accessories, so I made use of them. By gluing a 1/8" x 3/8" neodymium magnet in two spots that approximated the location on the floor plate over the holes, I then was able to fit appropriate hex cap nuts that locked the box onto the vehicle bed. To allow for any slight position misalignment of the magnets when I glued them, the hex cap nuts do a reasonable job to mate the cargo box to the vehicle. As a hint to the US readers, find 10-32 size cap nuts or smaller. That should be about 8mm for those that are metrically-inclined. The reason I went with this attachment method was so that the cap nut could move slightly to fit the socket while still being attached to the magnets, which are glued to the box. I just didn't think that I could be that precise with superglue and still have it fit properly, if I wanted the box removable. Inside the cargo box, you can see where I used additional Hexagon pieces to make bench seats. I also fashioned a gun and helmet rack out of sheet styrene pieces at the rear of the cargo compartment. The Moritas and helmets I sourced from Mongoose Publishing's spare parts order service, choosing Ref: 1491003207 from the Roughnecks boxed set. Yes, they are Rico's very own helmet and Morita, but don't think you can get away with reselling them on E-bay as "Hero" movie props, heh.

The dish was included in the Matchbox set, so I used it on the model. The antenna on the opposite side was just an aluminium dart fin holder for a dart game piece glued on top of a plastic small game chip. Under the chip I glued an additional cap nut, so it would fit the hole. Both the antenna and dish fit in the option holes provided. I made the top cargo cover removable, by clipping off some of the attachment clips inside between the cover and the lower part of the box. By sourcing unsharpened toothpicks at a craft store, I attached these as "fiddly bit" add-ons, but could have just as



The Mini-Gecko's internals

easily snipped off the exposed Hexagon panel clips. Heck, these could be imagined as a vehicular shock stick defence for the APC. You know how pesky those Arachnids can be.

The decals were made on my laser printer, using blank decal paper. I came up with a method of pre-covering the paper with a light spray of clear matte sealer that allowed the toner to stick to the paper, when normally it slid off in pieces. Before applying the decal, I over coated it as well with sealer. For the drivers in the front which can hardly be seen, I didn't want to lose two Cap Troopers to auxiliary duties, so I used spare parts from the MI plastic sprue (the heads and arm pads and extra arms) and using only ear swabs and superglue built upper torso-only drivers. I used a few pieces of sheet styrene and made them seats to sit in. If anyone ever sees their missing legs, I just refer them to the movie where the paperwork shuffler says "The Mobile Infantry made me the man I am today!"

I decided to not paint the bottom of the vehicle and wheels, as the natural cast silver was OK with me, and there was a chance that if painted it could attach or flake off onto my terrain boards. For the part that I *did*



The driving compartment

paint, I used Krylon® Fusion Textured Shimmer #2521 Graphite. One of the Hexagon pieces did a good job as an access ramp, attached with a Hexagon clip. That's it. This was an easy mod for an APC that I can use even if the listed vehicles are released, as this is not a direct proxy attempt. By not gluing the cargo box on, I have left the option open of crafting other modules such as com rigs or of the vehicle as a small flat bed rig. To carry something like oh say a baby Plasma Bug, you would need a larger rig. I built one that you can spot in a past article of Scenic Mayhem, in Signs & Portents Wargamer #33. Also made by Matchbox but unlike the set mentioned in this article, you should be able to find it currently on store shelves. For the past article, it made an approximate rendition of the 8-wheeled flatbed MAC Hauler. I have several of those vehicles and may decide to make a GK-12 APC or GK-16 MLRS. The GK-22 Heavy Gecko really intrigues me as well, armed with a Tanker-Bug-busting 140MM cannon. Of course, if there were as many Bugs as I had the need to use these upon, I very well might need the GK-19 Field Hospital!

Monty's Offer of the Month

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This month Monty has found himself inspired by Alan Oliver's tactics guide for the League of Non-Aligned Worlds. With that in mind he has commanded that we offer any League flet box for just \$75/£45 each, post free!



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Shielding Units In Starship Troopers

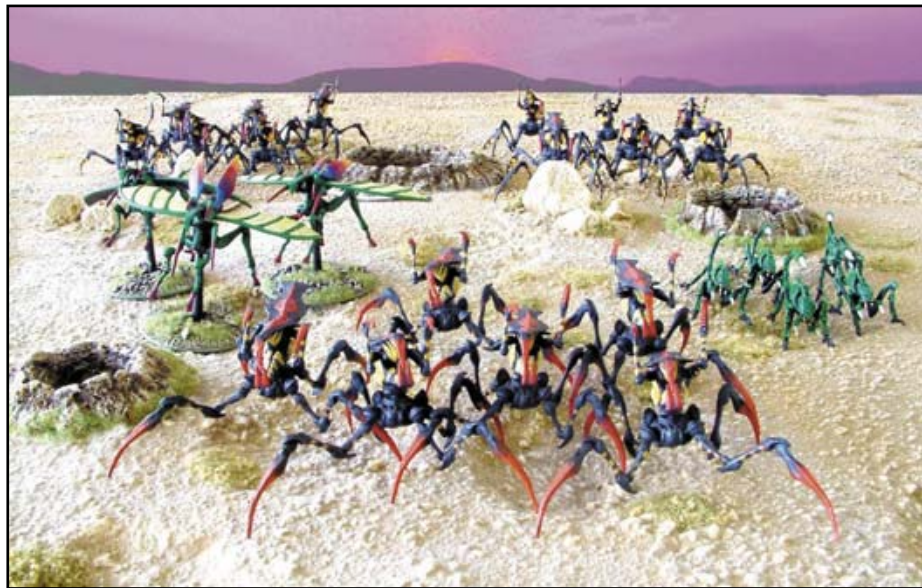
by David McElhoe

In many wargames, you can screen other units, and Starship Troopers is no different. The first step is realising that you *can* screen units. Many games specifically point this out to you, but Starship Troopers is a bit more subtle about screening. The Line of Sight (LoS) rules specifically point out how intervening models block LoS to other models that are their Size or smaller. Even if models are in the same unit, they block LoS to models in the same unit behind them. This becomes even more effective with large models such as Warrior Bugs because each model is Size 2 and about 3" wide, so 20-30 Warriors can screen your entire army! Most armies have a 6" command range, so this can really come in handy. Simply place a firing line of your more expendable models

(MI w/ Morita's for example) in front, and place your squad leaders 6" behind along with your special weapons. Your enemy will be forced to target the models in front unless they are on much higher ground, and the normal 3" fire zone will ensure that many weapons will be unable to affect your command structure.

This can also work to protect expensive units. Hopper bugs, for example, are a unit that you certainly want to attack with several times before they die. Three hoppers alone can be over a 500 point swing in a game if they are killed before they are used, so it is vital that they are protected. The best ways to shield them are to use expendable units, and take advantage of the fire zone rules. First of all, spread your expensive units over as much ground as possible. This makes them much less vulnerable to artillery and will ensure that there are a large number of models in any fire zone that is made against them. Then place a line of units that are Size 2+ in front of them, ensuring that the enemy must target the expendable front line first. Even with 6" fire zones, it will be impossible to kill more than two hoppers in the first volley because the hoppers can all be 6" from each other, so no target point other than the middle hopper can hope to harm all three. It is important to measure out all of these fire zones in advance if possible. No need to slow down the game, but just make sure that none of your important units are vulnerable.

Shielding units is another way to take luck out of Starship Troopers. A good general can not only reduce his casualties, but protect his most important units if he knows how to properly space and hide his most important units.



Warrior bugs screen an Arachnid force

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Mail Order Form

Code	Product	Price
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		\$

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