

STARLETTER #60

The Official *Star Fleet Battles* Newsletter

May 1989

SEVEN YEARS

This issue commemorates the seventh anniversary of Starletter, which began in April 1982. This is the fourth Starletter in the new format (and on the new fixed schedule).

ANNOUNCEMENTS

On a space-available basis, Starletter will announce events of interest to SFB players, including conventions, PBM campaigns, local tournaments, club meetings, special store events, etc. ADB and TFG make no warranty as to the quality, dependability, reliability, or reputation of the items announced. Send your announcements to ADB in care of TFG, and get them in as early as possible.

Readers should include a stamped self-addressed envelope when requesting information from one of the events listed below:

- 6-8 May, YEISHEA CON, Iowa State. SFB and other events. Info from Mike Miller, Room 60, Memorial Union, Ames, IA 50011.
- 12-14 May, NASHCON 89: Nashville, TN. Music City Roadway Inn. Star Fleet Battles tournament. Info from Games Extraordinaire, 109 Donelson Pike, Nashville, TN 37214. 1-800-777-GAME.
- ORIGINS National Convention, Los Angeles, 28 June - 2 July; info from Strategicon, P O Box 8399, Long Beach, CA 90808. National Star Fleet Battles championships, several tournaments and seminars.
- OKcon, Camelot Inn, Tulsa, Oklahoma, 14-16 July; info from OKcon, P O Box 4229, Tulsa, OK 74159. Science-fiction con with some gaming including an SFB tournament.
- GEN-CON Convention, Milwaukee, 10-13 August; info from TSR, P O Box 756, Lake Geneva, WI 53147.
- PBM Campaign, Star Fleet HQ, longest-running SFB campaign system. Send SASE for info to John Berg, 6122 North Artesian, IL 60659. On GENie, contact J.BERG11.
- Play-By-Modem Star Fleet Battles. Send in your orders to a central exchange where your First Officer will execute them and let you know how things turned out. See Topic 34, Category 10, page 805, GENie, or contact J.HAMMER1.
- Task Force expects to begin operation of its player contact system this summer. If you want to be on the list of known SFB players, send a post card with name and address to TFG.

SCANNERS REPORT

★ MEGAHEX: Task Force and Amarillo Design are pleased to announce that a new concept will be coming to Star Fleet Battles this summer. Captain's Module H Megahex will contain 240 large 1x1" counters for use in Star Fleet Battles and a special large-scale six-panel map to use with them. Each of the counters will portray the ship in a full-color artistic rendering by veteran SFB artist Ken Mayfield. This will add the color of miniatures without the expense and hassle. Module H includes the basic ships for all major SFB races. The map will match the standard black "4230" map used in Star Fleet Battles. Price was not available at press time. Stock number is #3033.

A TINY BIT OF ADDENDA

HYDRAN APACHE: The SSD was published in Captain's Log #7. The shields should be 36-30-24-24 like most CWLs. (K1.621) in Volume II was cancelled in Supplement #3. That's all there is this time.

IN THIS ISSUE

- ★ TWO NEW PLAYTEST SCENARIOS: Well, why *not* two?
- ★ SCENARIO-GRID: The SFB Scenario Grid, found on page 2 of this issue, is a list of all historical SFB scenarios ever published. This list is organized in a grid showing which races are involved in that battle. If you want to play a battle between, say, Romulans and Gorns, you need only look up Romulans along the left column (they are in the third grid) and then look across to the the Gorns (Column 5) to find a list of four possible scenarios. Note that the Romulan-vs-Gorn square is identical to the Gorn-vs-Romulan square. This is usually the case, but in a few cases (Federation-vs-Klingon and Klingon-vs-Federation) there are so many scenarios involved that it took two squares to list them and the lists are not identical. These are marked † for quick identification. A few scenarios that didn't fit anywhere else are listed under the race name on the left side. This grid was quite a shock to us when we first did it. There is only one Lyran-Hydran scenario in the whole game universe, and yet they are two of the most antagonistic enemies to be found anywhere. Perhaps this (and other shortages) will be corrected by future player input.
- ★ F&E FORMATION RULE: Given the many positive comments from F&E fans about the Starbase Incremental Damage System rule in Starletter #59, we have brought you another optional combat rule in this issue. It solves the DN Death problem.

(SP636.0) MIRROR IMAGE *(Jim Miller, Virginia)*

While on patrol, the command cruiser *Excalibur* under Richard Grey encounters another Federation cruiser. When Grey hailed the other ship, it responded with his own name and call numbers. The mirror image ship then attacked!

(SP636.1) NUMBER OF PLAYERS: 2; the Richard Grey player and the Mirrorodon player.

(SP636.2) INITIAL SET UP

Grey: Federation CC in 1110, heading C, speed 10, WS-I.
Mirrorodon: Fed CC in 3219, heading C, speed 10, WS-I.

(SP636.3) LENGTH OF SCENARIO: The scenario continues until all units belonging to one player have been captured or destroyed or have disengaged.

(SP636.4) SPECIAL RULES

(SP636.41) Use a floating map.

(SP636.42) Use drone, shuttle, and other rules as appropriate to a time period of your choice.

(SP636.43) The Mirrorodon ship is, in fact, a shape-changing alien creature that has adopted the form of the *Excalibur* in order to fight it. Being a mirror image it has certain advantages; being unfamiliar with its new form it has certain restrictions.

(SP636.44) Each turn, Grey completes his Energy Allocation Form first. He must then reveal his initial speed and which of his weapons are being armed. Grey must use plotted movement, but the plot is not revealed under the end of the turn. The Mirrorodon is not required to mimic the actions of Grey's ship.

(SP636.45) *Excalibur* is considered to have a "normal" crew; the Mirrorodon is treated as a "poor" crew.

(SP636.5) VICTORY CONDITIONS: Standard. Ignore crew effects.

STAR FLEET BATTLES — SCENARIO GRID

RACE	FED	KLINGON	ROMULAN	KZINTI	GORN	HYDRAN	LYRAN	ISC
FED	None	SH1, SH3 SH7, SH9 SH11*, SH12 SH17, SH19, SL19, SL20, SN8, SN9 SN13, SN14, SN15.†	SH2, SH10, SH33, SH34, SH38, SL88, SL89, SL90 SL105, SN6 SN12.†	SN2	SN1	No Border	SL76	SH24
KLINGON SL61	SH23, SH29, SH36, SH39 SL2, SL7, SL28, SL31 SL41, SL60, SL62, SL63, SL70, SL71, SL75, SL78, SL92, SL104†	SL26, SL84, SN16.	None	SH4, SH5 SH10, SH14 SH15, SH32, SL23, SL24, SL37, SL58†	SL25*	SH18, SL8, SL9, SL47, SL48, SL72, SL106.†	Allied	SH25
ROM	SL18*, SL34 SL42, SL44, SL67, SL69.†	None	Rom Civil War	SL74	SH21, SH28, SH38, SL18*	No Border	Allied	SN19
KZINTI	SN2	SL77, SN11†	SL74	SL11†, SL12, SL13, SL14 SL38.	No Border	No Border	SH30	None
GORN	SN1	SL25*	SL25*, SL45, SL73, SL102.	No Border	SL103	No Border	SH11	None
THOLIAN	SL32, SN10.	SH6, SH22* SL3, SL64, SL85.	SH31	No Border	No Border	No Border	No Border	None
ORION SL29, SL40 SL86*	SL4, SL6, SL10, SL16, SL21, SL53, SL54, SL57, SL66, SL68, SL82, SL83, SL89, SL108, SN3.	SH13, SL16, SL17, SL35, SL51, SL57.	None?	SH8, SL36.	None?	SH35, SL52.	None?	None?
HYDRAN	No Border	SL79, SL80, SL81, SL91, SL94, SN21†	No Border	No Border	No Border	Civil War?	SN20	None?
ANDRO	SL98	SL97, SL98, SL99.				SH26		
LYRAN	SL76	None?	No Border	SH11	SH11	SN20	Civil War?	None?
WYN	No Border	SH16-Var	No Border	SH16-Var	No Border	No Border	SH16	None?
LDR	No Border	None?	No Border	No Border	No Border	None?	SH27, SN17 SN18,	None?
ALLIANCE	Member	SL25, SL39, SL93, SL95, SL96, SH11.	SL25, SL30	Member	Member	Member	SH11	None?
COALI- TION	SL65, SH11	Member	Member	SH11	SH11	None	Member	None?

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(SP598.0) MATING FRENZY

by Tony Zbaraschuk, Washington

Space Dragons (SM7.0) occasionally mate, and these are spectacular sights. Sometimes ships stumble on the mating rituals and try to break them up so fewer Space Dragons can be hatched.

(SP598.1) NUMBER OF PLAYERS: 4: the Fleet player, two male Space Dragon players, and the Space Dragon female player.

(SP598.2) INITIAL SET-UP

Player 1: 500 BPV force within 3 hexes of 1803, facing any, speed 10, WS-II.

Player 2: Ancient Space Dragon (male) in 0215, facing B or C.

Player 3: Ancient Space Dragon (male) in 4115, facing E or F.

Player 4: Old Space Dragon (female) in 2630, facing any.

(SP598.3) LENGTH OF SCENARIO: The scenario continues until the Space Dragons are dead or have disengaged.

(SP598.4) SPECIAL RULES

(SP598.41) Use a floating map. Space Dragons may only disengage by distance. The fleet player may disengage in any direction by any method.

(SP598.42) Select a time period and use appropriate refits, drone speeds, booster packs, etc. For convenience, you might use one of the Battleforce-500 squadrons from Captain's Log #7.

(SP598.43) The female Space Dragon may not attack either of the males. (She wants to mate with them, not kill them!) The males may attack each other, but not the female. The

(SP598.44) Male and female Space Dragons mate by spending one turn at speed 0 in the same hex. If an unmated female begins a turn in the same hex with one (not two or more) male space dragons, mating begins if the male wants it to.

(SP598.441) During this period they may not use their claws, eyes, or flame. However, both tails attack drones entering the hex; they may attack different drones or the same drones.

(SP598.442) If any ship enters the hex, both Space Dragons will break off their mating ritual and immediately attack it with their eyes, claws, and flame (if they can). All attacks will do maximum damage; e.g. assume eye-phasers roll a "1".

(SP598.443) If a male Space Dragon enters the mating hex, the mating male can continue mating or attack. The dragon that entered the hex can attack or simply move through the hex.

(SP598.444) Once the female Space Dragon has mated with one male, she will not mate with the other.

(SP598.5) VICTORY CONDITIONS

(SP598.51) The fleet player uses the Modified Victory Conditions, treating all of the Space Dragons as enemies. A Space Dragon is "damaged" if 1/4 or more of each of its body parts is destroyed; it is "crippled" if 1/2 or more is. The fleet player scores a 200-point bonus if the female does not mate or mates but does not survive the scenario.

(SP598.52) The male Space Dragons also use the Modified Victory Conditions. A male Space Dragon scores a 300-point bonus if he mates and the female then disengages. Each of the males loses 150 points if the female dies.

(SP598.53) The female Space Dragon wins if she mates and then disengages. She scores a draw if she survives but does not mate. She loses if she does not survive.

(SP598.6) VARIATIONS: The scenario can be played again under different conditions by making one or more of the following changes:

(SP598.61) Use a smaller fleet (250 points), and old males and an adult female Space Dragon.

(SP598.62) Assume that the female is accompanying one to three baby Space Dragons.

(SP598.63) Have two, or three, female Space Dragons. Each male can mate only once. Increase the size of the fleet.

(SP598.64) Assume that the female Space Dragon is coy. She won't mate unless she is suitably impressed. Scoring damage on a ship, then entering her hex by the end of the same turn, will be considered suitably impressive.

(SP598.65) Have all four players bid. The low bidder takes the fleet and has a number of BPV points to spend equal to his bid. The other players take the dragons, with the lowest bidder getting first choice.

(SP598.66) Have another male arrive on turn 5, or roll a die every turn, add 2 to it, and have the third male arrive whenever the die roll is less than the turn number. After a third male arrives, start rolling for another one, but add the turn number of the previous male's arrival to the die roll.

(SP598.67) Have another player bring a "Greenpeace" survey cruiser into the battle. Greenpeace can fire only on the seeking weapons of the fleet player. This player wins if he gains 500 points of scientific information on the dragons and disengages.

(SP598.7) BALANCE: The scenario can be balanced between players of different skill levels by one or more of the following:

(SP598.71) Change the age of one or more dragons.

(SP598.72) Vary the strength of the squadron.

(SP598.8) TACTICS

FLEET: The key is the female. If she can be killed, the scenario is probably winnable. Concentrated power from the entire fleet will be required. A more dangerous approach (with a better chance of success) is to wait until mating begins, then move the entire fleet to point-blank range and attack the female (who will have only one defender). Remember that your "Alpha Strike" must be everything you have, scatter-packs, overloads, etc. Avoid letting the female mate on a reloading turn.

Try to get a Neo-Tholian ship as its web casters can keep the dragons apart, unless ADB bans Neo-Tholians from this scenario in the addenda.

MALE: Get the other male to attack the fleet, then go rendezvous with the female. If that doesn't work, try to arrange a concentrated three-dragon attack on the ships and then attack the other male and eliminate him.

FEMALE: Avoid close contact with the fleet. In a three-dragon attack, you want to remain behind the males and fire only at the ship that gets past them, then turn and run. Avoid taking damage as this will slow you down. Watch the enemy weapon arming cycle. Try to rendezvous at the end of a firing turn so you can mate while they are reloading.

(SP598.9) PLAYTESTER COMMENTS: We'd like to have some of these!

FEDERATION & EMPIRE

(308.7) FORMATION RULE

It is possible for players to assign ships to the Battle Force and yet assign them missions or positions which are less dangerous. This Formation Rule accounts for this.

(308.71) DESIGNATION: Each player can select one ship in his Battle Force for the Formation Bonus. This ship will usually be the flagship, but it can be any ship. It cannot be a ship which is part of a group. It cannot be a base. It cannot be a fighter or PF group. While a mauler can be given the Formation Bonus, it cannot function for purposes of (308.4) if in that position.

(308.72) EFFECT: The ship with the Formation Bonus is attacked, for purposes of (302.5) Directed Damage, at a ratio of 3-to-1 rather than the normal 2-to-1.

(308.73) PENALTY: There is no penalty for the ship which receives the Formation Bonus.

PLAYTEST REPORT FORMAT

For your report to be useful, it must be typed (computer graphics are ok) and in the following format. Put each ship (or scenario, or rule) on a separate 8.5x11" page. List your name, address, and phone number on every page. List all playtesters who played the scenario or ship at least once.

REPORTS ON SHIPS

1. List the Race, Class, and Project (900-series) number.
2. What mission is this ship intended for? Is it suitable for that mission? Why or Why not?
3. How many times did you test the ship in one-on-one duels? What ships did you test it against? What were the results?
4. How many times did you test the ship in squadron or fleet battles? Describe the fleets or squadrons used. Did the ship perform its intended mission adequately?
5. Does the ship have any hidden flaws? Are power, speed, shields, and weapons appropriate? Is the Sensor/Scanner track typical for that race? Is the ship recommended for publication?

REPORTS ON SCENARIOS

1. List the title and SP control number (e.g. SP601).
2. How many times did you play the scenario? How many times did you play it to completion?
3. Is the scenario unbalanced? To what extent, and toward whom?
4. List any of these terms that apply to the scenario: fun, boring, predictable, stupid, silly, one of the best, just another scenario.
5. Is there a "trick key" that can unlock the scenario and cause it to fall apart? If so, describe it, how it happens, why that is bad, and what you suggest we do about it.
6. List any proposed changes you think should be made.
7. Should this scenario be published? Immediately? Whenever there is space? In conjunction with something else?

REPORTS ON RULES (Never used for scenarios)

1. List the rule number and the issue of Starletter it was in.
2. Ask any questions about how it works or what it means.
3. List any conflicts with other rules.
4. List any game balance effects or changes in tactics that will be caused by this rule.
5. List any mistakes or typos you found in it.
6. Indicate anything that could be made more clear by an example or further explanation.

NEXT ISSUE OF STARLETTER

The next issue of Starletter will be mailed in mid-July 1989, bringing you more exciting material for the Star Fleet Universe.

PUBLISHER'S INFORMATION

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SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION

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BACK ISSUES

Back issues #47-#56 are in the older 1-page format. They will be available until 1 July 1989 for 25¢ each, plus a stamped self-addressed envelope with one first class stamp for each four back issues ordered. Postage to Canada is 30¢ for each four back issues. Overseas airmail postage is 45¢ for one back issue or 90¢ for each four issues. No foreign stamps, please. (All prices are in US funds.)

All of these issues have JCF cases, plus:

- #49: Prototype (P16) Comet rules.
- #50: Prototype (G94) Armor and (G95) Barracks rules.
- #51: Prototype F&E Stasis Field Generator rules.
- #54: WYN Mako War Destroyer SSD
- #55: Prototype (G96) Landing pad rules.

TASK FORCE GAMES SPARE PARTS

Spare parts are available for all Task Force products. Contact Task Force at the above address for a price list. All TFG products are available by mail directly from the company. Write and ask for a catalog of available products. Available four-page Starletters:

- #57: RoyalHawk SSD, Revised G7.9, Scenario SP463.
- #58: Revised SSDs for Gorn DD, Fed CVA, Orion CR+; new SSDs for Klingon G-1N and Lyran Bobcat-C.
- #59: Scenario SP60 (Adanerg), Kzinti Combat Tug SSD.

SFB ON GENie

The very popular Star Fleet Battles bulletin board has been moved to the GENie computer network. Star Fleet is Category 10 on Page 805 Menu item #1. Ask your local computer dealer for info on how to register on GENie. The computer system provides overnight access to the staff and rapid answers to SFB rules questions. Available for downloading are new SSDs, rules, and scenarios. Ongoing discussions of new rules proposals give you a chance to express your feelings before the product is printed.

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