



STARLETTER #71

The Official *Star Fleet Battles* Newsletter

May 1991

\$1

**TASK
FORCE
GAMES™**

SCANNERS REPORT

★ **AND NOW: ADVANCED MISSIONS!** By the time you read this, *Advanced Missions* (the advanced rules for the Captain's Edition) will be on the way to the stores and available for mail shipments. The boxed product includes a 192-page rulebook, a 144-page SSD book, and 216 die-cut counters.

★ **DOOMSDAY UPDATE:** We expect to ship C1 in mid-May and C2 in June. Modules J and K are next in line, but may have to wait until *STAR FLEET ACADEMY* is ready for press this Fall.

★ **SFB TOURNAMENT BOOK 1991:** Just in time for the convention season, *Tournament Book 91* includes the updated tournament rules and ships used in official and sanctioned events, as well as 216 die-cut counters. One sheet has all of the tournament ships and the counters needed for them; the other is the long-awaited "ammo sheet" with dozens of drone, plasma torpedo, and shuttle counters. Stock #3500. Price \$6.95.

★ **CAPTAIN'S MODULE P1:** Players always want more products, and ADB always needs more playtest reports. Maybe we can make a deal? "P" stands for "Playtest, Preview, and Prototype." This is a 32-page book with pre-publication sections from several upcoming products, including scenarios (Module S1), revised rules (J), new rules (K7), new ships (R2-R5), tournament scenarios (T), a new minor race (the Frax, C4), charts and rules from *F&E Total War*, and other items. For \$5, you can look at this new stuff, test it, file official reports on it, and even adapt it to your local campaign. If you don't want to pay for unfinished drafts, don't buy it. If you want to be the first captain in your battle group to fly deathrider PFs into a Frax War Destroyer and try for the Imperial Throne in *Les Tour Dez Klingonez*, buy it! Module P1 will be available 1 June by mail order ONLY. (TFG will sell it at the conventions it attends.) Only a limited number of copies will ever be published. There may be a Module P2 (with lots of X-ship material) if P1 is a success. Stock #3501. Price \$5 (see TFG order form for shipping details: postage, tax, etc.).

★ **CAPTAIN'S LOG #9** will focus on fighters in SFB. TFG plans to include a special bonus map. Release is planned for this Summer. Stock #5702. Price \$9.95.

★ **STAR FLEET ACADEMY**, our new introductory-level game, should appear for Christmas. We hope.

NEW SHIP FOR STAR FLEET BATTLES

(R9.922) **HYDRAN "BUFFALO HUNTER" DWF:** The Hydran DW design was based on the Hunter frigate. The first prototypes appeared in Y173; full-scale production was delayed until the new shipyard reached full operations in Y176.

The hull of a Hunter was split down the middle and widened, providing space for additional power, weapons, and other systems. A minimal fighter-carrying ability was provided. There is one spare shuttle and one spare fighter. Stinger-2s were carried; no Buffalo Hunter ever carried Stinger-Hs.

VARIANTS: Rhino Hunter DWH. This is the hellbore version.

We have provided a segment of the DWH SSD, which you can easily lay over the DWF and photocopy the combination to produce the Rhino Hunter SSD. BPV 95.

Buffalo Scout (replace fusions with sensors) BPV 90/70

Minesweeper (replace fighter with mine racks, ph-1 with

Trac, FUS with ph-G; increase #1 shield to 32) 80/60.

Escort (replace fusion with gatling, add full Aegis) BPV 93.

ELH Leader (not defined) and Light Carrier (not defined).

F&E: Buffalo Hunter 5-6(1)/2-3(0) replaces Hunter, Rhino Hunter 6/3 replaces CU, Elephant Hunter (ELH) 7/4 replaces Crusader. Production cost = 5 for BH and ELH, 4 for RH. Conversions (HN to BH, CU to RH, CR to ELH) cost 2 points (+1 for BH fighter).

TASK FORCE NEWS

◆ **RUMORS:** If you hear a rumor about Task Force, please ASK Task Force Games for the REAL story before passing it on.

◆ **STORES WANTED:** If your store does not carry SFB and other TFG products, whether it once did or never did, send TFG the name and address of the store and we'll send them information on the product line and have wholesalers call on them.

◆ **OTHER PRODUCTS:** Starfire is slated to return this Fall. King's Bounty is expected this Summer. Central Casting III (Heroes Now!) is expected in late Summer.

◆ **SUBSCRIBERS:** See special sale flyer insert!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

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

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

➤ **PBM Campaign, Star Fleet HQ, longest-running SFB campaign system.** Send SASE for info to John Berg, 6122 North Artesian, Chicago, IL 60659. On GENie, contact J.BERG11.

➤ **GEN-CON 91, 8-11 Aug, MECCA Convention Center, Milwaukee WI.** Very large national SFB convention with SFB events run by ADB Judge John Berg. Info from GenCon, Box 756, Lake Geneva WI 53147.

➤ **BORDERCON, 12-13 Oct 91, Salem EconoLodge (NH), I-93 Exit 2, halfway between Boston Mass and Concord NH.** Convention will include a DF&E Grand Campaign as well as SFB Scenarios for all skill levels. There will also be a dealer's room and other games. Info: Denise Keller, c/o EconoLodge, 1 Keewaydein Drive, Salem NH 03079.

➤ **MOD-CON, Sept 91, largest gaming convention in Italian history.** Info: Marcello Missiroli, via Andreoli 12, I-41100 Modena, Italy. BBS-Fidonet Matrix 2:332/504 node. Non-Italians free.

➤ **ANYONE** can playtest the scenarios and ships in Starletter. That's why they're here. You don't have to be on the staff.

➤ **X-SHIPS** remain an item of interest to many players, while others couldn't care less. The current plan for these is as follows: An extract of the new X-rules was in *Advanced Missions*. A draft of the complete rule set may be in a future P module (if P1 works out ok). Sometime in 1992 or 1993 we'll do Module X1, which will have all of the first generation X-ships and rules. There will be MANY changes to the old Nexus 18 stuff. A year or two later, we MIGHT do Module X2 with the Second Generation X-ships, or we might never do X2. We'll see. But if we do print X2, it probably won't look anything like Supplement #2, which of course (under the Patrick Duffy rule) never existed anyway.

➤ **THE LYRAN MOUNTAIN LION** has range-30 disruptors.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

SCENARIO: SP276 Coming Thunder (Lyran vs Hydran)

NEW SHIP: Hydran Buffalo Hunter War Destroyer

FOR F&E: The Katic Freestates

NEW SCENARIO FOR STAR FLEET BATTLES

(SP276.0) COMING THUNDER

(Y176)

by Steven Petrick, Texas

Buffalo Hunter DWs were reaching operational Hydran squadrons throughout this year, and increasingly the Coalition was experiencing problems in dealing with the new ship. This action was typical of this period when the new design was too few in number to be employed in war destroyer squadrons and was integrated into established frigate squadrons. Its arrival signaled that trouble was ahead for the Coalition forces in their struggle to contain the resurgent Hydran forces.

In this case, a minor ion storm had just ended, resulting in the two small patrol forces sighting each other.

(SP276.1) NUMBER OF PLAYERS: 2; the Hydran player and the Lyran player.

(SP276.2) INITIAL SET UP

HYDRAN: Crusader *Prince Hbtor*, Cuirassier *Onslaught*, and DWF *Commodore Horatol* (2xStinger-2) within two hexes of 0730, speed 10, heading F, WS-II.

LYRAN: DW+ *Firecat*, 2x FF+ *Twilight* and *Hrath's Whiskers* within two hexes of 3801, heading C, speed 10, WS-II.

(SP276.3) LENGTH OF SCENARIO: The scenario continues until all forces belonging to one side have been destroyed, captured, or have disengaged.

(SP276.4) SPECIAL RULES

(SP276.41) MAP: Use a floating map.

(SP276.42) SHUTTLES AND PFs: No shuttles have warp booster packs. There are no MRS shuttles, EW fighters, or PFs in this scenario. In an alternative where those are involved, use the appropriate rules.

(SP276.43) COMMANDER'S OPTION ITEMS

(SP276.431) Each ship can purchase additional or special equipment as Commander's Option Items (e.g. T-bombs, extra marines, etc.) up to 20% of its combat BPV. See (S3.2) for details and exceptions. Note that whatever is spent here counts in the Modified Victory Conditions (S2.2) as victory points for the enemy.

(SP276.432) All drones are "medium;" speed-20, in a variant of this scenario where ships armed with drones may be present. Each drone-armed ship can purchase special drones up to the historical percentages as part of the Commander's Option Items. Note that (S3.2) allows drone ships extra points for this purpose.

(SP276.44) REFITS: The Lyran DW has the plus and pack refits; the Lyran FFs have the plus refit. All Lyrans have ESG capacitors; all Hydrans can hold their fusion beams. No other refits have been installed on any of the units involved in this engagement.

(SP276.45) An ion storm has just ended in the local area (which explains the starting positions as the two forces did not realize their close proximity). There are still stray wisps of the storm present. This is represented by a single point of natural ECM applied to all ships in this scenario.

(SP276.5) VICTORY CONDITIONS: Use the Modified Victory Conditions (S2.2).

(SP276.6) VARIATIONS: The scenario can be played under different conditions by making one or more of these changes:

(SP276.61) Replace the Lyran force with a Klingon Force of an F5K, F5B, and E4B.

(SP276.62) Replace the Crusader and the Cuirassier with a Scythian (6x Stinger-2) and an Aegis Hunter; change one of the Lyran FFs to a DW in this variation.

(SP276.63) Use only the DW and its fighters on the Hydran side and the FF+s on the Lyran side.

(SP276.64) Replace the Buffalo Hunter with a Hunter, and/or replace the Cuirassier with a Rhino Hunter.

(SP276.7) BALANCE: The scenario can be balanced between players of different skill levels by one or more of the following:

(SP276.71) Change the Stinger-2s to Stinger-Fs.

(SP276.72) Replace the Crusader with a Hunter.

(SP276.73) Delete the plus refits from some or all the Lyrans, or add the P refit to some or all the Lyrans.

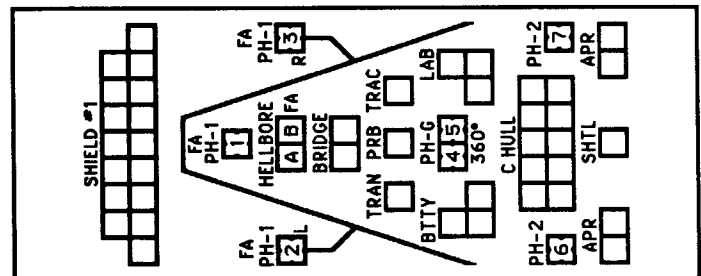
(SP276.8) TACTICS

HYDRAN: The Lyrans have twice as many ESGs as you have hellbores, so count on your hellbores to only buy you one good pass. You are going to need to do a lot of damage to the DW first; get it out of the way and the frigates should be fairly easy to handle. While this is the reverse of conventional wisdom, the battle seems to hinge on this point. Yours is the burden of attack because his seven disruptors represent more firepower than your two hellbores and five fusion beams.

LYRAN: Watch that you don't get caught by his fighters, and stay away from the gatlings. This is no time for quick rams, but look to use them to finish the job. Try to keep the range about 15 where all your disruptors can fire, and then wear him away one ship at a time.

HISTORICAL OUTCOME: We'll write this based on playtest reports of what actually happened in typical battles.

RHINO HUNTER DWH SSD SECTION



FEDERATION & EMPIRE

THE KALTIC FREESTATES

For an alternative history scenario, detach the four northern Klingon Provinces into an independent nation known as the Kaltic Freestates. These include provinces 0906 Kaldavia, 1107 Kithuania, 1407 Katvia (including the capital planet Kriga, which has a starbase and a defense brigade), 1707 Kestonia. These became semi-independent from the Klingon Empire in Y165.

The Klingon Northern Fleet was given to the Kaltics, who have a loose treaty with the Klingons for mutual defense against Kzinti aggression. The Kaltic Freestates can build one F5 per turn and one D5 per year at Kriga, assuming funds are available. They can substitute other F5 and D5 variants (respectively) and can make a 3-point conversion per turn at the starbase. Klingon production is not reduced. The battle stations in the Kaltic Freestates belong to the Kaltics. The Klingons do not build additional BATS south of the Kaltics (as this would dissolve the political fiction that the Kaltics are still part of the Empire).

The Kaltic Freestates are a Neutral Power and are treated in relation to the Klingons as the LDR is to the Lyrans. Any invasion of the Freestates will cause them to join the other side in the war.

PLAYTEST REPORT FORMAT

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

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

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

REPORTS ON SHIPS

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

REPORTS ON SCENARIOS

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

REPORTS ON RULES

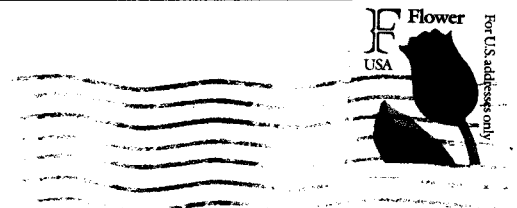
1. List the rule number and what product the rule is in.
2. Ask your questions about how it works or what it means.
3. List any conflicts with other rules.
4. Describe any changes in balance or tactics it causes.
5. List any typos or mistakes.
6. Indicate anything that should be added, deleted, or clarified.

WANT MORE PRODUCTS?

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

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

71



PUBLISHER'S INFORMATION

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

BACK ISSUES

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

- #57: Romulan RoyalHawk SSD, SP463 Tang Chi.
- #58: Revised SSDs for Gorn DD, Orion CR, Fed CVA; new SSDs for Lyran Bobcat-C, Klingon G1N.
- #59: Kzinti Combat Tug SSD, SP60 Battle of Adanerg.
- #60: SP636 Mirror Image Monsters, SP598 Mating Frenzy (space dragons!), Historical Scenario Cross Reference.
- #61: Klingon F5W SSD, SP502 Mothball Mutiny.
- #62: Federation Battleship SSD: SP1061 Taste of Fire; F&E Micro Scenario 1001 Last Link.
- #63: Federation DW SSD; SP1211 Scout Report.
- #64: Federation FFB SSD; SP1301 Interceptor Training.
- #65: Lyran Mountain Lion SSD; SP1311 Roar of *Golden Cub*.
- #66: Kzinti Scout-Drone frigate SSD; SP70 Settle their hash
- #67: Romulan FlameHawk SSD; SP1201 Attrition Assault.
- #68: Kzinti First Carrier SSD and Scenario.
- #69: Federation NCA and SP275 Passing the Football.
- #70: Klingon D5W NCA and SP79 Second Helping of Hash.

TASK FORCE GAMES SPARE PARTS

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

SFB ON GENie COMPUTER NETWORK

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

