



STARLETTER #72

The Official *Star Fleet Battles* Newsletter

July 1991

\$1

**TASK
FORCE
GAMES™**

PHASE II COMPLETE, NOW FOR PHASE III

The second phase of Doomsday has reached completion with the release of New Worlds II (Module C2) and the Captain's SSD Pack (with the SSD books from BS, AM, C1, and C2).

Work is now progressing on the third phase, Module J (to be called Strike Fighters or perhaps Strike Carriers) and Module K (to be called Flotilla Leader). These are expected later this year.

SCANNERS REPORT: NEW PRODUCTS!

AVAILABLE NOW! Right Now! Immediately! You Betcha!

- ★ NEW WORLDS I (Module C1) has been released.
- ★ NEW WORLDS II (Module C2) has been released.
- ★ TOURNAMENT BOOK 1991 has been released.
- ★ MODULE P1 (Playtest Pack #1) has been released.
- ★ CAPTAIN'S SSD PACK: For those veteran players who

bought the Captain's Rulebook and now wish they had all of those new SSDs, we have shipped the Captain's SSD Pack. In stores even as you read this; stock #5556 \$24.95.

★ MODULE D1 VETERANS' MASTER SHIP CHART is a limited run product (we only printed 1,000 copies). It has the complete Master Ship Chart and two of the Annexes, including all of the ships from the old Commander's Edition that have not yet been updated to the new Captain's Edition, plus all of those from Starletter. Module D1 is in stock NOW but available ONLY by mail order (and Origins) Stock #3551; \$5.

★ SFB PATCHES: The Star Fleet Logo in a beautifully-embroidered six-color patch. White, tan, or grey background. \$5. Logo will eventually be available on hats, T-shirts, etc.

AVAILABLE THIS SUMMER!

★ CAPTAIN'S LOG #9 is now in final preparation for release at GenCon in early August. The 80-page issue focuses on fighters. It includes more tactics articles than any previous issue and a large F&E section. Stock #5702; \$9.95.

★ MODULE P2: Our second playtest pack focuses exclusively on X-ships, including a complete rules draft, several scenarios, some of the SSDs, and a prototype campaign. To be released in August. Available only by mail order (or at conventions attended by Task Force). Stock #3502, Price \$5.

AVAILABLE FALL AND WINTER 91

- ★ MODULE J (Fighters) is in preparation for Fall.
- ★ MODULE K (PFs) is in preparation for Fall.
- ★ CARRIER WAR (Total War Part I) is now set for release in late Fall or early Winter. It will include rules and counters for SWACS, swarms, auxiliary carriers, design-your-own carrier groups, stasis field generators, and space control ships. Also included are counters for every pod and complete set-up charts for the basic game and an advanced scenario.

TASK FORCE NEWS

⊙ MAIL ORDERS of the all noted items: Minimum order \$10. Include \$3 shipping and handling per order in US. (Shipping to Canada add 20% of order; Overseas 40% surface, 60% Air.) Visa and Mastercard accepted. If you order items that are not yet available, your entire order will be held until we can ship complete. Allow 4-6 weeks for delivery. Include full address for UPS.

- ⊙ KING'S BOUNTY is expected in August.
- ⊙ CENTRAL CASTING III (Heroes Now! For all 20th century roleplaying genres) is expected in August.
- ⊙ STARFIRE is expected this Fall.

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 or service 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. National SFB Championships. Info from P O Box 609, Randallstown MD 21133.

➤ ARCHON 15, 12-14 July, St Louis Missouri. SFB event on Saturday. Info from Box 50125, St Louis MO 63105.

➤ 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.

➤ NOVAG VI, 26-27 Oct 26, Fairfax VA. Info (703-450-6738) 101 E. Holly Ave. #5, Sterling, VA 22170. Patrol tournament, other SFB events, other gaming.

➤ COUNCIL OF 5 NATIONS XVII, Oct, Albany. SFB Patrol and beginners. Info from Eric Paperman, Schenectady Wargamers Association, PO Box 9429, Schenectady, NY 12309.

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

➤ 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.

➤ THE CAMPAIGN is an SFB campaign being operated from 804 Hawthorne Lane, Geneva IL 60134. Send an SASE for information. We have no experience with this group.

➤ BIRTHDAYS: SFB Designer Steve Cole has turned 40. SFB Deputy Designer Steve Petrick has turned 35.

➤ COUNTERS: C1 and C2 have 108 each (as per back cover), not 216 each (error in Z-section of rulebook).

➤ PLAY BY EMAIL: Contact J.HAMMER1 on GENie.

NEW SHIP FOR STAR FLEET BATTLES

(R7.928) NEO-THOLIAN BATTLESHIP: This ship is real; it is not "conjectural" like some other battleships. Unfortunately, none were with the 312th and none arrived in our galaxy. This SSD shows what an original home-galaxy Battleship would look like if refitted in the Holdfast for duty here. (Prior to Y181, delete mech links from tractors, treat repair as cargo.) Spare shuttles 2+2, Command 10, Explosion 33H+3C+4CM, docking 32H+2C+2CM.

Collar (structure between COM and rear hull) can be left with the ship or taken with the COM (increasing its movement cost to 0.33). The COM can dock to the hull without the Collar.

F&E: Neo-Tholian data is not available at this time.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

SCENARIO: SP1353 *Sword of the Holdfast*

NEW SHIP: Neo-Tholian Battleship

FOR F&E: Hydran Options

(SP1353.0) SWORD OF THE HOLDFAST

(Y178)

by Tom Carroll, New Jersey

In Y178, when the Holdfast had finally calmed down from the initial news of the approach of 312th Battle Fleet, many in the academy turned to the possible uses of the fleet and began running combat simulations involving Neo-Tholian forces. As the strength of the 312th wasn't known as of yet, most such simulations tended to be rather exaggerated. The following involving a Neo-Tholian Battleship is such an exaggeration, though still a favorite of the cadets.

With the increased pressure from Klingon and Romulan forces, the Tholians were losing ships and territory at a disastrous rate. It was reasoned that a surprise attack against the Klingon fleet's repair facilities (specifically, the FRD supporting Operation Nutcracker) would seriously undermine the Coalition's ability to fight in the sector plus require them to rethink their war versus the Holdfast. Only a force led by a Neo-Tholian Battleship was thought to be able to carry the mission out.

(SP1353.1) NUMBER OF PLAYERS: 2; the Tholian player and the Klingon player.

(SP1353.2) INITIAL SET-UP

THOLIAN: setup on map B: NBB *Sword of the Holdfast*, CC, NCA, CA, C, TK5, DD, SC, CVA (12x S-II, 12x S-III), PCA, PCA, anywhere on or past 30xx, heading E or F, speed max, WS-III.

KLINGON: setup on Map A: FRD, with two HBM (12x ZV), in 2215 with a D5K and an F5B internally docked [see (SP1353.45)], any facing, speed 0, WS-I.

Tug-AK with two cargo pods within three hexes of FRD, any heading, speed 4, WS-I.

C9K, D6BD, D5L, D5K, F5L, F5K, F5SB, D6V (10xZV), 2xE4AB anywhere on map A, any heading, WS-II.

(SP1353.3) LENGTH OF SCENARIO: The scenario continues until all forces belonging to one side have been destroyed, captured, or have disengaged.

(SP1353.4) SPECIAL RULES

(SP1353.41) MAP: Use two maps, the 42xx hex column of map A connects to the 01xx column of map B. These maps are fixed; they do not float. Any unit leaving the maps has disengaged and cannot return.

(SP1353.42) SHUTTLES AND PFs: All shuttles and PFs have warp booster packs.

(SP1353.421) If using the optional MRS shuttles, the Tholian NBB has two, the CC and CVA have one and the C9, D5L and D6V have one each.

(SP1353.422) If using EW fighters, one of the ZVs on the FRD, and on the D6V, and a Spider-II and a Spider-III on the Tholian CVA are EW types. If not using EW fighters, they are all standard fighters of their types.

(SP1353.423) There are no PFs in this scenario.

(SP1353.43) COMMANDER'S OPTION ITEMS

(SP1353.431) 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. The cost of the MRS shuttles provided in (SP1353.421) above is deducted from the total BPV allowed to the assigned ship for purchasing other Commander's Options.

(SP1353.432) All drones are "medium;" speed-20.

Each drone-armed ship can purchase special drones up to the historical racial percentages as part of the Commander's Option Items. Note that (S3.2) allows drone ships extra points for this purpose. Note that "fast" (speed-32) drones are available for purchase as Commander's Option Items.

(SP1353.44) REFITS: The Tholian and Klingon ships have the refits listed in the initial set up. Note that all drone armed ships will have received the drone rack refit, and all Aegis escorts will have full Aegis. Delete the fighter boxes and mech links (but not the tractors) on the NBB.

(SP1353.45) The D5K and F5B docked inside the FRD, have been damaged. Consider all hull, weapons and warp to be destroyed. All other systems (bridge, security, transporters, tractors, labs, etc) and shields are active and at full strength. The D5K and F5B have used their CDR and EDR.

(SP1353.5) VICTORY CONDITIONS

Use the Modified Victory Conditions (S2.2).

The Tholians gain 100 BPV bonus for destroying the FRD.

The Klingons gain 100 BPV bonus for destroying the NBB.

(SP1353.6) VARIATIONS: The scenario can be played again under different conditions by making one or more of the following changes:

(SP1353.61) Replace the Klingons with a Romulan force of: Condor, SparrowHawk-A, SparrowHawk-B (8x G-SF and 8x G-II), SkyHawk-E, SkyHawk-E, SkyHawk-L, SkyHawk-F, SkyHawk-A, KRT, FRD with SparrowHawk-A and SkyHawk-A internally docked. The hangar modules on the FRD have 12 G-SF fighters.

(SP1353.62) Allow the Klingon to substitute any two ships of equivalent hull type for any two ships in his fleet, but no additional leader versions may be taken. The Klingon might want to give some consideration to an SFG ship in this case, though he must remember that webs will break stasis fields.

(SP1353.63) For a smaller scenario, use only the NBB, SC, DD, and TK5 on the Tholian side. The Klingons use only the C9K, F5S, F5L, F5K, and the FRD. The FRD has no fighters and has only the D5K docked internally.

(SP1353.7) BALANCE: The scenario can be balanced between players of different skill levels by one or more of these:

(SP1353.71) Change the C9K to a C8K.

(SP1353.72) Replace the D6V (10x ZV) and E4As with a D7V (12x Z-Ys), AD5, and F5A.

(SP1353.73) Delete or add a small ship to either side.

FEDERATION & EMPIRE

THE HYDRAN OPTIONS

by Scott Malcomson

No True Carriers (-20): The Monarchy decides that hybrid ships will do the job just as easily (and cheaper than) true carriers. Delete all true carriers from Hydran production and OB.

The Lyran Wall (+5): Both MBs are deployed and upgraded on the Lyran border prior to Hydran entry into the war. Delete the war cruisers from the pre-war builds and place two BATS in any Lyran border hex NOT containing a BATS. Remove the MBs from the Home Fleet.

Hydran Fatalism (+3): Believing (realistically, some would say) the war is a lost cause from the outset, the Hydrans fortify the Home Worlds prior to their entry into the war. Remove both MBs from the Home Fleet and add two starbases in the Capital hex. Remove all pre-war construction (the military budget went to convert the two MBs to SBs and still had to stretch a tad).

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!

PUBLISHER'S INFORMATION

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

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

- #57: Romulan RoyalHawk SSD, SP463 Tang Chi.
- #58: Revised SSDs for Gorn DD, Orion CR, Fed CVA; new SSDs for Lyran Bobcat-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.
- #71: Hydran DW, SP276 Coming Thunder, Kaltic Freestates.

All issues are in stock, *but don't wait too long!*

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.

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