



STARLETTER #82

The Official *Star Fleet Battles* Newsletter

March 1993

\$2

**TASK
FORCE
GAMES™**

CARRIER WAR GETS CLONED!

When we first announced a contents list for the long-awaited first F&E expansion kit in Captain's Log #10, we were flooded with calls and letters asking what some of the components (SFGs, LTTs, electronic warfare, war destroyers, etc.) had to do with "carrier" war. That was a good question, and the F&E staff suggested that the planned \$30 Carrier War product be divided into a \$20 Carrier War (just the carriers!) and a \$10 Special Operations pack (with SFGs, LTTs, pods, EW, DWs). You'll get the same components for the same money. (In fact, you'll get more since a special sector scenario map will be printed inside the folio cover of each product, something you wouldn't have found in the boxed \$30 kit, and you'll get a special scenario.)

SCANNERS REPORT

- ★ MODULE D3: BOOMS & SAUCERS (any day now!).
- ★ CARRIER WAR is now set for April 93.
- ★ MODULE T: TOURNAMENTS is set for April 93.
- ★ F&E SPECIAL OPERATIONS: About May or June 93.
- ★ MODULE C3 (New Races) is set for Origins 93.
- ★ CAPTAIN'S LOG #12 is set for GenCon 93.
- ★ MODULE S2: SCENARIOS #2 is set for summer.
- ★ PRIME DIRECTIVE is now expected in the summer.
- ★ MODULE P6 (Early Years playtest) has been cancelled.

The material will be used in Captain's Log #12 and the final product (Module Y) will appear in 1994 as scheduled.

TASK FORCE NEWS

⊕ STARLETTER has (for several years) usually included a ship and related scenario. These were, all too often, randomly selected from any number of future products, some years in the future. No more! Effective with this issue, Starletter will contain elements from a product scheduled for release in the near future. You'll still have time to get playtest reports in, and you'll still have the new items months before non-subscribers. But by making sure that the items from Starletter are going to be formally published within six months, the need for new players to send off an order for back issues of Starletter will be eliminated.

⊕ 1993 Catalog: TFG has just completed a brand new, 16-page, fully-illustrated catalog, and it can be yours for a 9x12 SASE with 75¢ (US) postage sent to TFG. (Canadians should send two International Reply Coupons.) TFG will enclose a coupon worth \$1 off your first TFG mail order purchase from the catalog, effectively making it absolutely free!

- ⊕ STARFIRE: FIRST CONTACT will be in stores soon!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Starletter will announce events of interest to SFB players, including conventions, tournaments, PBM campaigns, clubs, 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.

- ROUNDCON 93, 19-21 March, Columbia SC. Sanctioned SFB and other games. Info from (803) 731-7764.
- NORTHEAST Wars I, 19-21 March, Burlington VT, Sheraton Conf Center, SFB, Beginners, Starfire, PD. 802-863-3666.
- CONTOON 93, 2-4 April, Siegfried Hall, Ohio U, Athens, Ohio. Joint Animation/Gaming Con, Sanctioned SFB and other games. \$5 for weekend. Info: Chad Taylor, 93 East First St., The Plains OH 45780 (614) 797-4691

➤ PENTACON-V, 2-4 April, Cornell Univ, Ithaca NY. Circle of Death, Frigate Demo Derby, other games. Info from Peter Bakija, 105 Eastern Hts Drive, Ithaca NY 14850. 607-256-4836.

➤ AGOG VI, 17-18 April, U of A SUB, Tucson AZ, sanction SFB. Info: KB, 3256 E Calypso, Mesa, AZ 85204 (602) 807-8051.

➤ ROC-KON 17, 30 April - 2 May, Excelsior Hotel and Statehouse Convention Center, Little Rock ARK; Sanctioned SFB state championship. Info PO Box 24285, Little Rock AR 72221.

➤ MADISON GAMES CON, 15-16 May, Quality Inn South, Madison WI. Sanctioned SFB. Info: Ken Rotar, 1140 Morraine View Drive #106, Madison WI 53719; phone (608) 274-8192.

➤ ADVENTURE GAMEFEST 93, 21-23 May, Oregon Convention Center, Portland. Many events including sanctioned SFB, Warhammer, Puffing Billy, and more. Info from Adventure Games NW, 6517 NE Alberta, Portland OR 97218.

➤ CON MAN I, 4-6 June, Manchester NH. Sanctioned patrol tournament, other SFB events. Info: Con Man, P O Box 842, Manchester NH 03105. Give this new convention a shot!

➤ ORIGINS 93, 1-4 July, Tarrant County Convention Center, Fort Worth Texas. SFB National Championships. Star Fleet Missions, F&E national championships. Prime Directive. (Module C3.) Info from GEMCO, P O Box 609, Randallstown MD 21133.

➤ GENCON 93, 19-22 August. Mostly RPGs, but does include the largest SFB event outside of Origins. Info from P O Box 756, Lake Geneva WI 53147. TFG has announced that it is sending "the two Steves" to GenCon to put on an extensive array of Star Fleet Universe events. Details next issue.

➤ TACTICAL NOTEBOOK: It's not SFB or even science fiction, but wargamers will find this publication interesting. Each issue contains a collection of historical articles on military organizations, battles, units, etc. P O Box 125, Quantico VA 22134. Subscriptions are \$39.95 (12 issues); sample copies \$4.

➤ COMPUSERVE: Within a few weeks, ADB will have an account on Compuserve (CIS) and will be able to answer questions and provide playtest materials there. Look for us in the RPG forum. We are not leaving GENIE and for now will provide more on GENIE than CIS, but those who are on CIS or who prefer it to GENIE can contact us there, and we'll see how it goes.

STAR FLEET WARLORD

Task Force and Amarillo Design have contracted with the Agents of Gaming to run a Play-By-Mail campaign system based on Star Fleet Battles. Star Fleet Warlord is a combat/ economic/ exploration game system set in the Greater Magellanic Cloud after the Andromedan War. Players search for resources, then try to capture and hold them. (Some players find it easier to conquer another player's resources than to find their own.)

For a FREE rulebook (with no obligation to play), send \$5 for postage and handling to: Agents of Gaming, P.O. Box 31571, Dayton OH 45431-0571. Or send E-mail to B.GRAW1 GENIE. You can call AoG at (513) 256-2432 weekdays from 9-5.

THE SELTORIANS ARE HERE!

(R15.4) HEAVY CRUISER: The Seltorian heavy cruiser was the main combat unit used against "armed resistance" to the will of the Tholian Overlords. Note the larger than average number of marines and shuttles. (Shuttles include four GAS, two Admin, in one bay; this is within the BPV.) As there were no seeking weapons in the Tholian Galaxy, the scarcity of tractor beams is not surprising. The relatively poor maneuverability was a concession to the Tholians, who counted on their web casters to keep the Seltorians from revolting. The Shield-Breaker weapon (hit on drone, marked WB) is not yet available for publication;

treat it as a disruptor which cannot be overloaded, has a maximum range of 10, and can ONLY damage shields. It can be fired after the first hellbore option and before the second one in the Sequence of Play. (This weapon was turned into the Web-Breaker just before the Seltorian Revolution. Data in Module C3.) Explosion strength 21, docking points 8, command rating 8, two spare-shuttles (1+1).

The Seltorian ship is shown with disruptors in Starletter #82, but might have a new weapon of similar power in Module C3. (There is furious debate on the staff between those who do and do not want a new weapon to play with/put up with.)

The Seltorians used a unique ship construction theory. There were only three rear hulls (size 2, 3, and 4), and sub-classes were made by adding booms. To convert the CA to the CL, delete the entire right boom, change the movement cost to 2/3, change the arcs of phasers 9 and 10 to FX, and reduce the shields to 26-26-26-26. Crew 43, Marines 20. Explosion strength 16, docking points 7, command rating 6, two spare-shuttles (1+1). Other data (turn, breakdown, disruptor range, etc.) same as CA.

This pattern was followed with the DN/BCH and the DD/FF. The smaller single-boom ship had equal shields in all arcs while the larger double-boom ship had heavier shields in the front.

For battles in the Tholian Home Galaxy, neither the Tholians nor the Seltorians can use: fighters, PFs suicide shuttles, T-bombs, or WWs. They did not adopt SS, TB, or WW until Y184.

SCENARIOS: Test this ship against Kzintis and Gorns. Test it in mixed fleets with Klingons against Alliance forces. Test it against Tholians who don't have web casters or snares.

F&E: The Seltorians have a base in hex 2519. (To simplify things, it can't be attacked.) This is the ONLY supply source for the Seltorians and is where their ships are built. Every turn, the Seltorians move out from the base and attack Tholian ships, then retrograde to their base. Each turn, the Seltorians can build one CA or CL and two DDs or FFs (or one of each). Their base can make one 3-point conversion. The Seltorians have 20 EPs each turn (which don't come from anyone else). They cannot give or receive money from anyone. They are treated as Klingon allies. Original OB (Y182) includes one CA, two CL, two DD, four FF, one SC. Conversions: CL to CA 2 pts, FF to DD 2 pts, DD to SC 2 pts, DD to PFT 5 pts, CL to CLS 3 points. The Seltorians in our galaxy cannot build the DN or BCH classes used at home. They get six PFs per turn for free (and can buy more).

CA	CL	DD	FF	SC	PFT	CLS
8	7	5	4	◆ 2-5	◆P 2-5	◆ 3-7
CA	CL	DD	FF	SC	PFT	CLS
4	4	2	2	P 1-2	1-2	1-4

(R15.1) SELTORIAN BACKGROUND: The Seltorians resemble large humanoid Terran insects and reach a height of 1.65m and weight of 50-70 kilos at full maturity. All Seltorians are born from eggs and are about 60cm tall at birth. They reach their "adult" height of 1.65m within a few months.

The only fertile females are the Queens, who make up less than 1% of the population and live more than a century, laying hundreds of thousands of eggs. Egg production can be controlled by limiting dietary intake, allowing the Seltorians to control their population and then to increase it rapidly when needed. Queens do not possess a particularly high level of intelligence.

The infertile females are the Workers, who comprise more than 95% of the population and live only a few years. (One authoritative source cites a life span of five years, but notes that few Workers die natural deaths.) Workers are reasonably intelligent and provide most of the starship crews, a job for which they

are trained practically from birth. They are born with the knowledge that they will not lead long lives, but they work their entire lives mostly without complaint.

Fertile males, called Rams, live only until they mate with a Queen, after which they die rather swiftly. Those Rams which do not mate within a few weeks of sexual maturity become infertile and live for two centuries or more as Sages. The Sages run the government, have the highest intelligence, provide most of the starship officers and industrial administrators, and take a much longer view of racial development.

The Seltorian race resides in the original Tholian Home Galaxy. Prior to the downfall of the Tholians, the Seltorians occupied the position of "most trusted subject race" within that galaxy and maintained their own ships and shipyards. The Seltorian fleet acted as auxiliaries to the Tholian fleet, and Seltorian ground troops (acclimated to the more common temperatures on worlds with sentient populations) did the bulk of the enforcement of Tholian Will.

After the revolution, the Seltorians replaced the Tholians as masters of a galaxy-wide empire. The Seltorians created the Tribunal, a "war crimes commission," charged with finding and destroying the remaining Tholians. The Seltorian Tribunal tracked most of the escaped Tholians to a small satellite galaxy near the original home galaxy and destroyed them before they could launch a counter-revolution. Several groups were known to have escaped to (or at least toward) other nearby galaxies, and the Tribunal resolved to track them down. Hive Ships of incredible size were assembled and sent on the long voyage to many different galaxies, including both the Milky Way and Andromeda galaxies. Scouts from a Hive Ship, following the 312th Battle Squadron, contacted the Klingons in Y182. They announced their presence and mission, and the Klingons were only too happy to point out the location of the Tholian Holdfast.

The Seltorians sent word home (the Klingons were disappointed that it would take two centuries for more Seltorians to arrive) and then (with Klingon permission) set up a base on a small undeveloped planet near Tholian space and began producing warships, PFs (which they considered a wonderful invention), and warriors at a fast rate.

After several Seltorian raids on the Tholian frontier, which mostly provoked PF duels in the Neutral Zone, the Klingons suggested a series of joint operations to destroy key Tholian battle stations, and the Seltorians were only too happy to oblige. Numerous such actions were conducted, and the Tholians quickly dropped into a defensive posture, calling home their expeditionary fleets and ultimately reaching an informal and separate ceasefire with the Klingons (but not with the Seltorians).

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.

PUBLISHER'S INFORMATION

STARLETTER is written by Amarillo Design Bureau and published by Task Force Games. *STARLETTER* is Copyright © 1993 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 subs 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 Postal Money Orders are also acceptable. Send subscriptions to TFG, P O Box 50145, Amarillo, TX 79159. Make checks payable to TASK FORCE GAMES.

BACK ISSUES #57 to date available from TFG for \$2 each (US).

- #60: SP636 Mirror Image Monsters, SP598 Mating Frenzy (space dragons!), Historical Scenario Cross Reference.
- #61: Klingon F5W SSD.
- #62: F&E Micro Scenario 1001 Last Link.
- #73: Frax CC SSD, F&E Scenario *They Who Would Be King*.
- #74: Lyran CCX SSD and scenario, options for *TWWBK*.
- #78: Frax BB and Scenario.
- #79: Fed NCL boarding diagram & scenario. F&E ships.
- #80: Gorn Fast Carrier Resupply ship and Scenario. F&E.
- #81: Romulan Tournament Eagle, Tournament Scenario, and Battleship factors for F&E.

Task Force will shortly discontinue selling back issues, so if you have always meant to get them, you had better hurry!

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.

See the TASK FORCE NEWS in this Starletter for a special announcement regarding their new catalog.

SFB ON GENIE COMPUTER NETWORK

Talk to the Star Fleet Staff directly by computer modem. Star Fleet is Category 10 on Page 805 Menu Item #1. Ask your local computer dealer or club for info on GENie or call GENie Client Services at 1-800-638-9636 (Voice Only). The computer system provides overnight access to the staff and the answers to your game questions. New SSDs, scenarios, and playtest modules are available for downloading on page 1020. Join in ongoing discussions of new rules and ships, or propose your own. Weekly real-time conference with SFB staff. You can contact "TFG\$" or "ADB\$" directly via Electronic Mail on GENie.

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