



STARLETTER #90

The Official *Star Fleet Battles* Newsletter

July 1994

\$2

TASK
FORCE
GAMES™

THE JINDARIANS ARE HERE!

The early summer of 1994 will mark the first encounter of SFB players with a new, or rather a very very old, race. The Jindarians have been in space for 100,000 years, using hollow asteroids for starships. Given their multi-century lifespans, they show very little interest in the affairs of the Galactic Powers (and won't make more than temporary alliances). Full background is in Captain's Log #15, and the first ship is on page 3.

(R92.71) JINDARIAN DESTROYER: The Jindarian destroyer is a conventional starship, not a hollow asteroid. (The rules for the hollow asteroids are too extensive to present here. These rules include directional rock armor, special boarding rules, prospecting shuttles, modifying SSDs and boarding party diagrams as each asteroid ship is unique, etc.) Explosion 12, 2 spare shuttles, docking points 5, command rating 4, can do gravity landings.

SCANNERS REPORT

★ CAPTAIN'S LOG #15 includes a timeline. Also the usual great fiction, scenarios, tactics, F&E, Warlord, Missions, PD, and more! \$9.95 Stock #5711. CL#15 has been shipped!

★ MODULE X1 was released at Origins. After 10 years of playtesting and constant revisions, the X-ships are finished, and now they're here to finish you! Stock #5612. \$19.95.

★ UPRISING, the new Prime Directive adventure, was released at Origins. Stock #5806. \$7.95.

★ COMING THIS YEAR: CL#16, Module F1 Jindarians, Prime Adventures #1. Other products are in development, and their schedule will be announced in future issues.

All TFG products (and spare parts for them) are available by mail. Write to TFG for a catalog and price list. All products are available from TFG mail order; include \$4 shipping and handling for all orders in the US; others ask for rates. Task Force accepts Visa, Mastercard, and Discover card for your convenience.

TASK FORCE NEWS

⊕ MINIATURES: Well, the best laid plans and all that... The new Star Fleet 2300 line has been delayed due to problems with production not under the control of TFG. We are attempting to set this right and get the ships into service as soon as we can.

⊕ ALKELDA DAWN, \$11.95, #6007. The Vestrii from First Contact return in this combination scenario sourcebook which takes us to the Vestrii homeworld and details their battles against the Kess and the J'Rill. Alkelda Dawn takes place BEFORE the Vestrii entered our Universe and features a brand new countersheet. (Available Early August.)

⊕ SKY MARSHAL, \$7.95, #6200. The first in a new series includes articles on Ship Design Techniques, Strategy & Tactics in the Starfire Universe, and more. (Available in September.)

SO YOU WANT TO PLAYTEST?

We do not recognize or send playtest materials to groups until they start sending playtest reports to ADB. Don't ask if you can playtest; start playtesting! Include a stamped reply envelope for an evaluation of your efforts and new assignment.

We still need reports on the following scenarios from P modules!

Module P1: SP64. Module P3: SP336, SP109, SP344, SP1281 (re-test using temporal elevator), SP278.

Module P4: SP1064, SP374, SP864.

CL#12: All of them. SP225A use 3xD4 vs 4xPC. SP248 and SP225 have no T-bombs for the Tholians.

CL#13-14, MO#2: All of the SPs. CL#15: All of the SLs.

Starletter: SP221, SP266, SP268; F&E They who would be King.

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.

➤ DRAGONCON, 15-17 July, Atlanta Hilton. (404) 925-2813.

➤ DEXCON 3, 21-24 July, Holiday Inn Jetport, Newark NJ. SANCTIONED SFB, full captain's event. Info: Dexcon 3, PO Box 3594, Grand Central Station New York, NY 10163.

➤ ARCEECON: 23 July. 24121 W. Theodore St., Bldg. #1, Plainfield, IL 60544. Sanctioned SFB event.

➤ DARK CON, 12-14 Aug, Ramada, Norman OK. Info from PO Box 19782, Oklahoma City, OK 73144. Sanctioned SFB.

➤ GENCON 94, 18-21 August. Mostly RPGs, but does include the largest SFB event outside of Origins. Prime Directive National Championships. Info from PO Box 756, Lake Geneva WI 53147. (They promised a better room this year, with lights!)

➤ Battlegroup Ithaca Con, Oct.7-9, SFB Sanctioned Patrol, contact CSSS, Cornell Univ. 129 White Hall, Ithaca NY 14850.

➤ CONQUEST, 4-6 Nov, Santa Maria CA. SFB and PD. Info: PO Box 1854, Santa Maria, CA 93456-1854

➤ OCTACON, 4-6 Nov, Holiday Inn East, Indianapolis IN. SFB, PD. Info: The Dragon's Claw, 9842 E 21st Street, Indianapolis, IN 46229, (317) 897-8231.

➤ RUCON V, 5-6 Nov, Lock Haven Univ PA. Sanctioned SFB. Info: PUB Box 150 LHU, Lock Haven PA 17745.

➤ ORIGINS 95, 13-16 July, Philadelphia Convention Center. 1-800-529-EXPO (in Ohio 216-673-2117) to get on the mailing list. ADB will again be the exclusive operator of SFB events.

➤ STAR FLEET WARLORD: Agents of Gaming operates this play-by-mail strategic SFB campaign in the Greater Magellanic Cloud. Buy ships to search for (or conquer, or defend) resources needed to buy even more (and bigger) ships. For a rulebook (with no obligation to play), send \$5 for postage and handling to Agents of Gaming, PO Box 31571, Dayton, OH 45431-0571.

➤ LONGEST-RUNNING SFB PLAY-BY-MAIL CAMPAIGN. It began in 1985 and is now in Turn #52, Y191 in the middle of the Andro Invasion. Join us! Send a stamped self-addressed envelope to John D Berg, 609 Apollo Dr, Joliet IL 60435.

➤ STARLIST (a list of known SFB players) is available from Task Force. Send \$1 and a stamped self-addressed envelope. They hopefully will have someone within driving range for you.

➤ FREE ERRATA BOOK, listing all errata and typos for SFB, is available from TFG. Send a 9x12 envelope with 75¢ US postage to receive yours! (Canadians must provide 86¢ US postage or three IRCs. Foreigners provide six IRCs.) This errata book has been uploaded to GEnie and Compuserve.

KOMMODORE KETRICK SAYS

These items were left out of the errata book because of an error. (I think Ardak screwed up, but I don't dare prove it!)

(D6.68) This also applies to fighters and shuttles. Also see (G2.23). Units with disrupted fire control cannot lay mines, from the hatches, transporters, or by any other means.

(R10.35) MLS: This unit cannot lay more than one mine per impulse (one total, not one per rack).

TOURNAMENT: Option mounts on the WYN Black Shark TC are hit on whatever type of weapon they actually are.

(E93.0) WARP-AUGMENTED RAIL GUN

This weapon is the primary heavy armament of the Jindarians. This version of the WRG rules has been heavily edited since only the "light" (LRG) version of the weapon is given here (and even so, it is badly crowded). The warp-augmented rail gun fires a solid shot of energized neutronic material at a speed of warp 9.95.

(E93.1) DESIGNATION

(E93.11) SSD: Each WRG or LRG box on the SSD is one warp-augmented rail gun. Each is recorded and fired separately.

(E93.12) DESTRUCTION: Warp-augmented rail guns are destroyed on Torpedo hits on the DAC (D4.21).

(E93.13) COST TO REPAIR: Light WRGs (LRGs) cost 4 points to repair; only Jindarians can repair them.

(E93.14) TECHNOLOGY: Jindarians ONLY.

(E93.2) ARMING PROCEDURE

(E93.21) ARMING COST: Each LRG requires 1 point of warp power on the turn of firing. This power can be allocated, or from reserve warp power.

(E93.22) HOLDING: If a warp-augmented rail gun is not fired by the end of a given turn, it can be held and fired during the following turn, or any subsequent turn, at the cost of 1/2 point of allocated power from any source. This holding energy must be paid during the Energy Allocation Phase of the turn, and if it is not paid, the weapon is discharged (E1.24).

(E93.23) OVERLOADS: WRGs cannot be overloaded.

(E93.3) FIRING PROCEDURE

(E93.31) FIRING PROCEDURE: The number of damage points scored by a warp-augmented rail gun is determined by the range and a die roll. Refer to the table below. Roll a single die; if the result is within the probabilities listed, the weapon has hit the target and scored the designated damage. If the result is not within the Hit# listed, the weapon missed and scores no damage.

See (E93.54) regarding plasma torpedoes.

(E93.32) RANGE EFFECTS: When firing at a target without a lock-on, use the effective range for the hit probability and the true range to determine the damage scored. Light warp-augmented rail guns have a maximum range of 10 hexes.

(E93.33) FIRING RATE: A warp-augmented rail gun can fire once per turn, but not within a quarter-turn (8 impulses) of a previous firing by a given WRG.

(E93.34) TYPE: The WRG is a direct-fire heavy weapon. It fires in the Direct-Fire Weapons Fire Stage (6D2).

(E93.63) LIGHT RAIL GUN FIRING TABLE

RANGE	0	1-5	6-10
HIT#	6	1-5	1-4
DAMAGE	7	5	3

See (E93.5) Special Cases.

(E93.4) RAPID FIRE (DEFENSIVE MODE)

Light railguns cannot use this mode.

(E93.5) SPECIAL CASES

(E93.51) TERRAIN:

(E93.511) ATMOSPHERE: A light warp-augmented rail gun's warhead is halved (round fractions down) if it passes into or through a hex of atmosphere (P2.5). If it passes into a second hex of atmosphere, it will be totally degraded and will not score any damage on a target in such a hex. The halving occurs when the warhead enters the hex, including the instant of firing. This rule applies even if the warp-augmented rail gun is part of a base built on a planet with an atmosphere [exception to (P2.722)].

EXAMPLES: If fired at a range of zero at another unit in the same atmosphere hex, the warhead would have a strength of 3.

If fired at a target in an adjacent atmosphere hex, the light warp-augmented rail gun would not score any damage if the firing ship was also in an atmosphere hex, or would score 2 points of damage (assuming a hit) if the firing ship was not in an atmosphere hex.

If fired at a range of 10 at a unit in an atmosphere hex with no other intervening atmosphere hexes, the warhead would score 1 point of damage (assuming a hit).

(E93.512) ZONES: A light warp-augmented rail gun's warhead is reduced by 25% (fractions rounded down) at each range bracket if it is fired inside of a radiation zone (P15.0) [including near a neutron star (P15.5) or ion storm (P14.1)], nebula (P6.0), or heat zone (P10.0) [including near a white dwarf (P10.5)].

EXAMPLE: A light warp-augmented rail gun fired at a target inside of a radiation zone would score 4 points of damage at range 0, 3 points of damage at range 1-5, 2 points of damage at range 6-10, and no damage beyond that range.

(E93.513) DUST: A light warp-augmented rail gun's warhead is reduced by 50% (fractions rounded down) at each range bracket if fired through a dust cloud (P13.0). If the dust cloud is an intense one (P13.5), subtract an additional point from the strength of the warhead before determining damage.

(E93.514) OTHER: Including EW effects, light warp accelerated rail guns are affected by the following as any other direct-fire weapons: asteroids [(P3.3) and including (P3.25)], black holes (P4.23), and pulsars (P5.32). Any item not listed or defined in its own rule as having an effect has no effect.

(E93.52) SYSTEM INTERACTIONS: Warp-augmented rail guns have various interactions with other systems:

(E93.521) ESG: Light warp-augmented rail gun fire is not affected by, and does not affect, ESGs. The two systems ignore each other as a probe fired as a weapon (G5.37).

(E93.522) WEB: Same as any other direct-fire weapon (G10.61).

(E93.523) TRACTORS: LRG fire is not affected by tractor beams any differently than any other direct-fire weapon.

(E93.524) PHYSICAL OBJECT: While LRG ammunition is a physical object, it cannot be placed in stasis (G16.0), displaced (G18.0), or transported (G8.0).

(E93.525) DRONES: LRGs are penalized under (FD1.52).

(E93.526) PA PANELS: Absorbed by PA panels normally.

(E93.527) MINES: While the ammunition fired by a warp-augmented rail gun is a physical object, it will not trigger a mine [unless it was fired at the mine under (M8.52)].

(E93.53) NON-VIOLENT COMBAT: Cannot use NVC (D6.4).

(E93.54) PLASMA TORPEDOES: The energized matter fired by a light warp-augmented rail gun has a deleterious effect on plasma. In such a case, the weapon rolls a normal "to hit" for the range, and if a hit is secured, the plasma warhead is reduced by an amount of damage equal to half of the damage (warhead) strength of the LRG at that range (fractions are retained to be combined with further fire). LRG and phaser fire is combined.

EXAMPLE: A plasma-R torpedo is about to strike a badly damaged Jindarian frigate. A Jindarian destroyer 5 hexes away opts to fire its two bearing warp-augmented rail guns at the plasma torpedo. The rolls are a 2 and 5, so both shots hit the plasma. The damage for each warp-augmented rail gun shot at this range is 5 points, which is halved to 2.5, and then the two are combined for a total 5 points. The plasma torpedo's warhead is reduced from 100 to 95 points, and the destroyer captain gets to explain that it was "all I could do".

BOOMS & SAUCERS IN F&E

Any time a Fed DN (any type) or Kling-on C8 is destroyed, roll a die. A result of 1-3 means successful separation; replace it

DNSCR	C8BM
6	6

with the appropriate boom/saucer counter at right. Trade it in for a 6-point discount on a new DN build.

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, or written on a report form. 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 before you can do another one. More assignments are available on GENie or CIS; 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 to completion 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 © 1994 Amarillo Design Bureau. Subscriptions to *STARLETTER* cost \$5 for six issues (one year, First Class Mail) in the US, Canada, APO, and FPO. Overseas subs are \$10 for six issues by Air Mail. European customers write: Task Force Games Ltd., Unit 30A, Hardwick Ind. Estate, Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk IP33 2QH or call (0284) 725656. 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, PO Box 50145, Amarillo, TX 79159. Make checks payable to TASK FORCE GAMES.

BACK ISSUES #73 to date available from TFG for \$2 each (US).

- #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: Battleship factors for F&E.
- #84: Old (Tholian) Galaxy Raider.
- #85: Klingon Early Years F4 SSD and scenario.
- #86: Tholian CWV.
- #87: Federation commando FF, scenario; unusual F&E ships
- #88: Lyran DWV carrier and scenario.
- #89: Frax submarine and scenario.

Earlier issues are out of stock and no longer available.

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.

COMPUSERVE users can contact ADB at 71333,2123 or find us in the Board Games section of Play-by-Mail games.

AMERICA ON-LINE: Find us in the Play-By-Mail games category of on-line game support or Email "TFG1" or "SteveC ADB".

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

90