


CAMPAIGNS

ET ACTION * GROPOS

BABYLON 5 WARS

WOLF 359
Population: 1,394,050
Mass: 0.6679
Diameter: 52,200
Equatorial Radius: 26,000
Eccentricity: 0.05
Inclination: 0.77
Mean Density: 1.6
Natural Satellites: 4
Apoee: 68.67
Period: 145.90
Cent: 0.89 SY



APRIL
MAY
2003

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CONTENTS

- 1 Cover art: Todd Boyce
- 2 News in Brief
- 3 AoG Campaign System
- Victory by Any Means
- 4 Persephone Tender
- Victory by Any Means
- 5 VBAM Universe
- Victory by Any Means
- 7 Campaign Shipyards
- Victory by Any Means
- 8 Colonize & Conquer
Campaign System
- M Sean Martinez (Bandit)
- 9 Planetary Facilities
- Scott McGaffin
- 10 FA Campaign System
- Adrian Coombs-Hoar
- 11 B5W Tactics III
- Todd Boyce
- 16 LCV Tenders
- Steve A Kizervexis
- 17 Terrain Generation
- Matt Murray (Sentinel)
- 21 Planet Killer of a
different feather
- Steven Austin
- 22 GROPOS: Terminator
- Alex Roberts
- 28 Centauri Grotto Tender
- Reid Hupach
- 29 Dark Star
- Zero
- 30 Alternate Aegis
- Ben Rubery
- 31 Special Report: B5 RPG
- Mongoose Publishing

Diesel Ready For Pitch Black 2

VIN Diesel told SCI FI Wire he begins filming the SF sequel film, Riddick, in Vancouver, B.C. in two weeks.

After difficulty with the contact lenses in the predecessor movie, Pitch Black, Diesel ordered a new set for the sequel. "We've upgraded from hard lenses to soft," Diesel said in an interview.

The second installment finds Riddick, now a hunted man, in the middle of two opposing forces in a major crusade.

Diesel said that he had a hand in the development of the film, influencing even the scientific explanations for the film's villainous creatures. "[I've been] creating creature characteristics and attributes you won't see until scene two or scene three and researching on the Internet to explain negative matter: where these villains come from, these Necromongers," he said. "[We have to explain] their scientific existence." Diesel added, "We're going to create this huge universe. And I'm excited about exploring this character's purpose in this universe and what his whole deal is." Riddick, the first in a proposed new trilogy of films centering on Diesel's character, is anticipating a June 25, 2004, release.

Karl Urban (Eomer in The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers) has joined the film. Thandie Newton (Mission: Impossible 2) is in talks to join the cast for writer-director David Twohy. Production begins June 9 in Vancouver, B.C., with Judi Dench and Colm Feore also starring.

Feore plays Lord Marshal, a warrior priest who is the leader of a sect that is waging the 10th and perhaps final crusade 500 years in the future. Dench portrays Aereon, an ambassador from the Elemental race, an ethereal being who helps Riddick unearth his origins. Urban will play Vaako, a military commander under Lord Marshal. Newton would play Dame Vaako, the trade paper reported.

Enterprise Alters Course?

PRODUCERS of UPN's Enterprise told TV Guide that they will make a "slight revision" in the show's course to make it more epic, according to a report on the official Star Trek Web site.

Executive producers Rick Berman and Brannon Braga said the show will soon embark in a new direction.

Expect "epic challenges ... that better exploit the sense of awe and danger" for the crew, Braga told the magazine.

Berman added, "Let's just say there will be a slight revision in our mission, and a slight revision in the part of space that Enterprise is heading into."

Davidson Talks Troopers 2

JON Davidson, producer of the upcoming straight-to-video sequel Starship

Troopers 2, told Moviehole that the film's budget would remain low.

"This instalment of Starship is being kept low budget for an excellent reason: to provide a comfort level for Sony so that they will hire Phil Tippet as the director," Davidson said.

Tippet, a visual-effects artist, created the insectoid creatures in the first Starship Troopers, which was directed by Paul Verhoeven.

For the sequel, "Sony is getting a huge bargain on the visual effects, in exchange for allowing Phil to helm the film," Davidson said. "We will also need lots of help from the talented folks in Phil's shop to make it happen and be visually exciting. It really has to be a labor of love to pull it off for next to no money."

Olmos To Star In Galactica

OSCAR-NOMINATED actor Edward James Olmos is close to signing a deal to star as Cmdr. Adama in the SCI FI Channel's upcoming four-hour miniseries and backdoor pilot Battlestar Galactica.

Another Oscar nominee, Mary McDonnell, has agreed to play the role of President Laura Roslin. Lorne Greene played Adama in the original 1980s TV series.

The cast includes British actor Jamie Bamber as Apollo and Katee Sackhoff as Starbuck.

Michael Rymer (Queen of the Damned) will direct the "reimagining" of the classic Galactica, which begins production in Vancouver in March. Battlestar Galactica will air exclusively on SCI FI in late 2003.

Foundation Script Is Done

JOHN ROGERS (co-screenwriter of The Core) told SCI FI Wire that he has finished a screenplay for a film adaptation of Isaac Asimov's Foundation trilogy of SF books, for director Shekhar Kapur.

"He said to focus on the 'Mule' arc in the second book, and that was the way in," Rogers said in an interview. "Now we'll see if it's one movie, two or three."

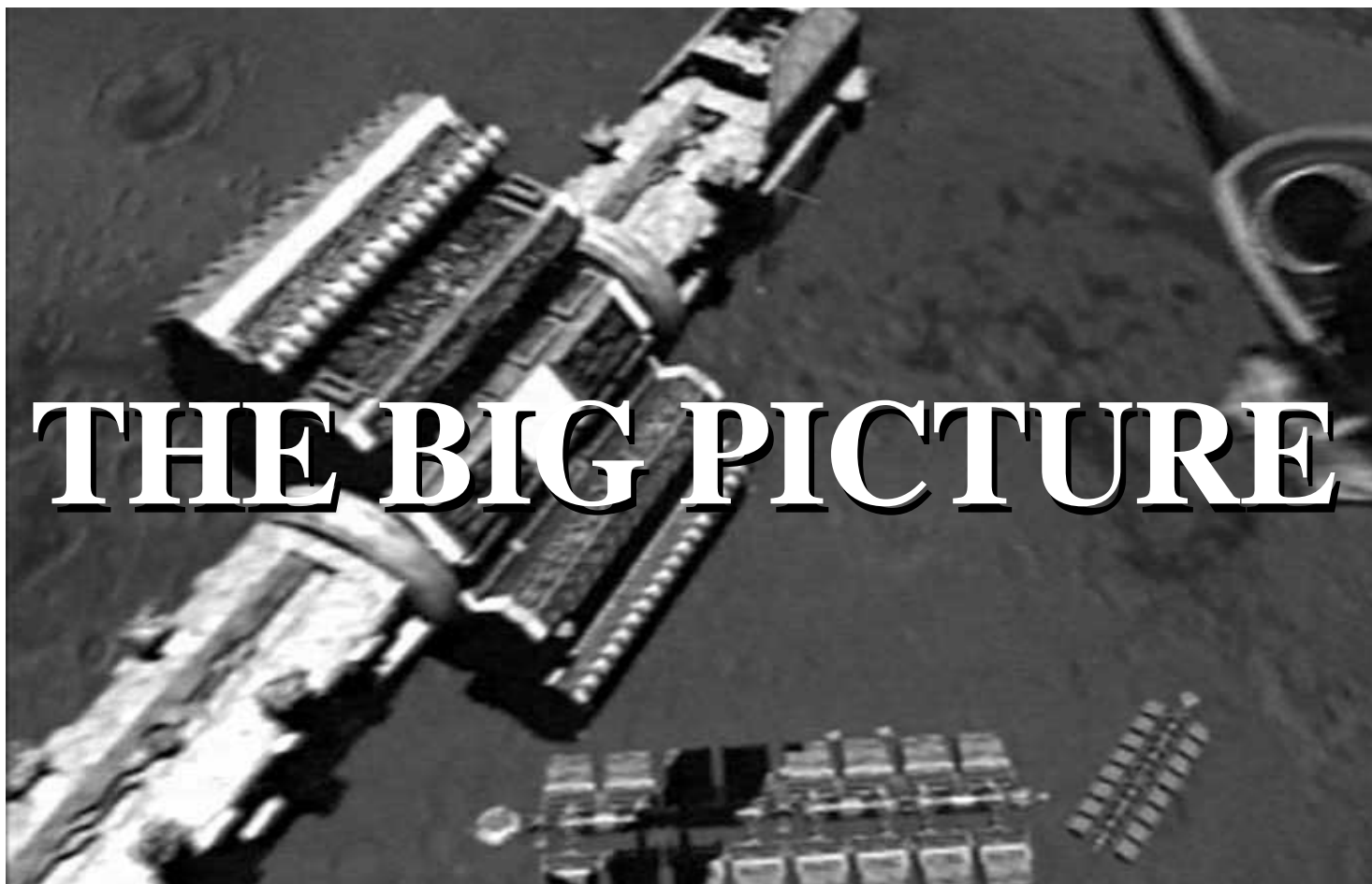
The adaptation required Rogers to pull out pieces of action from a largely theoretical work. "Isaac Asimov is a real intellectual, so chapters would start with 'that was a thrilling escape from the space pirates, wasn't it? Yes, it was. Now about economics.'"

As a writer, I need the space pirates. I just can't have the economics discussion here. So there was a lot of trying to stay in the spirit of Asimov [while] at the same time expanding the text."

No studio attachment or production start date has been announced.

CAMPAIGN GUIDE: VICTORY BY ANY MEANS


The collapse of Agents of Gaming killed many promising products that were “in the works”. But one - the campaign guide - refuses to die. This former cornerstone of B5W’s future lives on as a highly flexible, generic, campaign system that aspires to adapt to all space combat systems.



A BATTLE wages across the stars. Your forces have been forced to engage the enemy in a war that it looks like neither side can win. Your actions, as well as those of your equally skilled opponent will decide the fate of a dozen worlds. As your starships battle for the skies, your troops are landing on alien worlds and establishing beachheads in the first of a new wave of ground assaults against the enemy. As the battle is taken to the enemy there is another battle close at home - whom among your inner circle can you still trust? Can you know for certain that one of them is not conspiring against the empire? Only time will tell...

VICTORY by Any Means is the current title of the space campaign game system that was formerly in development by freelancers attached to Agents of Gaming before the loss of the license.

Known as Crossroads to Empire at that time, Victory by Any Means is a generic campaign system designed to play out campaigns in any desired setting. This adaptability allows for a campaign to be as easily placed in the Babylon 5



Those who have a group interested in playtesting Victory by Any Means, please visit the Victory by Any Means playtest page at vbam.firenebula.com. All playtesting is currently covered by a non-disclosure agreement and the rules are not currently available for public consumption.

setting as any other popular science fiction universe.

The term 'generic' may be a deterrent to some, but the format of the Victory by Any Means campaign guide means that that campaign moderators and participants have a greater degree of flexibility in deciding what type of campaign they wish to play. All that is required other than the core campaign rules is a set of source materials for a particular setting. What are source materials? Source materials are

guidelines for integrating your desired setting into the Victory by Any Means campaign rules. Each setting is different from the next one, and as such there may be special rules additions or alterations that will need to be made in order to simulate the desired setting. In addition to these rules changes, any given set of source materials also includes such things as unit statistics for space or ground units (if using the Victory by Any Means combat resolution systems).

One of the virtues of the source material based system is that players can use any game system they desire for resolving combat. Although the original campaign guide was developed with the Babylon 5 universe and Babylon 5 Wars in mind, it is only a matter of creating new source materials in order to use any other tactical space combat game instead. It is also possible through source materials to integrate third-party ground combat games into your Victory by Any Means campaign.

Once a setting and source materials is agreed on, players can then get down to the meat of the Victory by Any Means campaign system. Victory by Any Means is a full-featured system, with rules included covering such things as colonization, morale, research and development, intelligence gathering, diplomacy, trade, and planetary bombardment, as well as space and

ground combat. Despite the level of detail evident in the campaign rules, campaigns using the Victory by Any Means system are relatively hassle free when it comes to paper work. Turn orders and campaign maintenance are minimal compared to other campaign systems.

Two of the features that are most exciting about Victory by Any Means are its random universe generation rules and the Campaign-level Ship Combat Resolution (CSCR) system.

The random universe generation rules are an excellent tool for the aspiring campaign moderator. Not only does it take some of the work out of generating new campaign universes, the system also can be a lot of fun to use. The random universe generation rules use a 'ring-based' structure with number of rings generated being based on the number of players in the campaign. Thus, larger campaigns will require the generation of more rings, which inevitably means more star systems available for conquest. As each ring of star systems is generated the final campaign universe will begin to take shape, connected by an interwoven network of jump/star lanes.

Perhaps one of the most ambitious elements of Victory by Any Means has been its development and implementation of the CSCR system. As many campaign players can attest, it doesn't take long in a reasonably sized campaign environment before ship combat resolution becomes a problem. It doesn't matter whether what combat resolution system your source materials and players have adopted for resolving space battles, there will come a point where there just isn't time to sit down and play out all of the battles and still maintain the focus and momentum of your campaign.

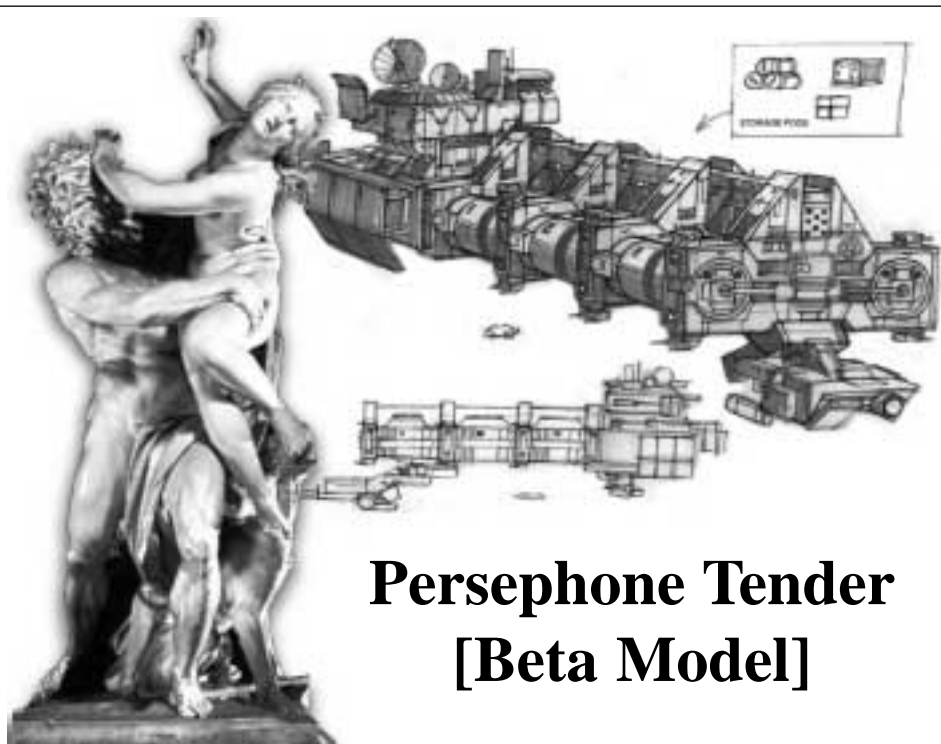
CSCR steps in to handle this problem by presenting a format by which true fleet-level battles can be fought out in short order. CSCR allows for quick, strategic combat resolution yet retains much of the flavor of combat. Many campaign systems, pen and paper and electronic alike, tend to handle strategic combat poorly, but the CSCR rules allow the battling players a great degree of leeway in letting their personal playing strengths (or weaknesses) shine during battle.

The primary advantage of handling your battles through CSCR over other dedicated ship combat game systems (such as Babylon 5 Wars or Fleet Action) is simple: time.

In the amount of time it would take a group of players to play out a moderate sized battle in B5W or FA several CSCR engagements can be resolved. For increasingly time-starved people that see their free time (not to mention their gaming time) continue to dwindle, CSCR can be a godsend.

Victory by Any Means is currently undergoing another round of playtesting in order to sort out problems with the system and continue to improve upon the initial design. Its' authors are looking at avenues for print publishing, but there is nothing decided at this time.

* * *



Persephone Tender [Beta Model]

THIS ship was created for Agents of Gaming as part of the network of support ships that would add "flavour" to any campaign system.

The following is the "fluff" that would have accompanied the SCS for the EA Persephone Tender.

The Persephone was created because of an AOG mandate not to use the Cotton Tender (or any other Babylon Project design) in the campaign guide.

THE Earth Alliance found itself in need of a new breed of fleet tender following the Dilgar War. However, little funds were left in the EA defense budget to fund such a project and the new tender's designers were forced to borrow heavily from past EA ship designs in order to bring their project to fruition.

The Persephone Tender is heavily influenced by the Hyperion hull with the Persephone's forward and rear superstructures being nearly identical to those of the Heavy Cruiser. The rest of the design looks incredibly different, however, and the ship could never be misidentified as a Hyperion.

The Persephone is equipped with four cargo canisters mounted to the underside of the hull. The cargos hauled by a Persephone are accessible at all times by virtue of the canister design, increasing cargo transfer times. These cargo canisters are modular equipment and can be quickly dropped and replaced while at port to improve turn around time for Persephone Tenders.

The Persephone Tender is named for the Greek goddess Persephone, daughter of Demeter. In mythology, a deal was struck between Demeter and Hades that they would share Persephone for half of the year each. Given that the Persephone spent half of its time at home and half its time on the battle lines the name was found to be quite fitting.

Resupply in Victory by Any Means

FLEET tenders and their ilk play a very important part in the Victory by Any Means campaign rules.

An empire must use fleet tenders and other military transports to carry supplies to fleets operating abroad.

Basic supply lines exist throughout a player's empire, extending for several jumps in either direction from developed colony worlds or supply depots.

These basic supply lines transparently maintain the supply levels of those fleet elements operating within their range.

However, there are instances where a player will want to move their forces beyond this supply safety net and operate far from such basic supply lines.

Whether it is a standard long-range patrol of one's borders or an epic campaign against the enemy, these cases require the use of transports and tenders to maintain supply for the fleet.

In Victory by Any Means military transports can be used to extend supply lines in one of two ways.

Firstly, transports are capable of extending supply lines over restricted jump lanes, which is otherwise impossible to do.

Secondly, transports laden with supplies can accompany fleets beyond normal supply range and act as a mobile supply point.

The fleet will continue to consume available supply units until the transport's supply stocks are depleted. Used transports can then be redirected back to resupply while other unused transports arrive from home with fresh supply stocks for the fleet.

(The SCS for this ship can be found inside the Attachments folder)



THE SETTING

WHAT is a campaign guide without some point of reference? A generic guide can sometimes overwhelm players and moderators alike, and this is a fact that has not been overlooked by the Victory by Any Means staff. Work began in earnest earlier in the year to develop a unique science fiction setting for use with the Victory by Any Means campaign guide. This setting and associated source materials will help new players get accustomed to the Victory by Any Means campaign system, but perhaps more importantly it will provide an "off the shelf" set of source materials for use in play or as a basis for creating your own source materials.

The setting being developed for Victory by Any Means revolves around the conflict between two alien species, the Kuissians and Boltians. The wars between the Kuissians and Boltians were hard fought in their history, but the very nature of such conflict changed with the entrance of the Terrans to the galactic scene. With a third race having emerged with the capability to travel the stars using extra-dimensional travel drive the universe would not be the same again.

Development of background materials, including race histories and technology information, is still in its early stages. However, progress is being made on fleshing out and building this new universe to help support the campaign system.

Victory by Any Means Opening Fiction

CAPTAIN Sorkenal waited nervously in his chair. I wonder if they intentionally make these as uncomfortable as possible, he wondered, in order to keep people off balance. Captain Sorkenal definitely felt off balance, it wasn't often a mere captain was called before the committee.

A junior assistant entered the waiting room and announced in a grand voice as if he was addressing a room full of people instead of just one: "The committee will see you now."

The Captain quickly rose to follow the assistant. The walk was less than five meters with absolutely no place to deviate from the path, but the assistant marched as if leading a grand parade. Even the assistants have delusions of grandeur. If he wasn't about to be called before the assistant's bosses he might've tried to knock the assistant down a few notches.

Just as the two-man procession reached the door to the committee chamber, it opened and from it stepped another man in uniform. Captain Sorkenal immediately recognized Captain Perton of the Verbanal Union Navy. Sorkenal had not realized that Captain Perton would be called to testify before the Committee and in the shocked second his mind took to consider it, Captain Perton strode past him without even a nod of acknowledgement. Sorkenal turned his head to follow him but an impatient noise from the assistant brought him back to the moment and he quickly followed the assistant through the door.

The chamber beyond was plain and much smaller than Sorkenal expected. But then again only those with business are called before the committee, and then only a few at a time. A single chair sat behind the single table facing the raised semi-circle of the committee bench and so after removing his cap he quickly sat down.

A quick gesture from one of the committee members sent the assistant scurrying away, leaving only Sorkenal, the five-committee members, and a single technician who managed the audio/video recording equipment.

As soon as the door closed behind the assistant, the center committee member gestured to the technician, who nodded in reply. He then rose. "This session of the Boltian Assembly Committee on Military Affairs is now called to order. Ambassador Renmok of Tolzeky presiding. Due to the importance of today's meeting full roll will be called. Ambassador Gel of Belzan?"

"Present," answered the man immediately to Renmok's right.

"Ambassador Nelseloz of Durken?"

"Present," from the woman to Renmok's far right.

"Ambassador Tenaz of the Gurelon Mercantile Alliance?"

"Present." The woman on Renmok's immediate left.

"Ambassador Petmol of Verbanal?"

"Present." The man on Renmok's far left.

Ambassador Renmok continued, "Called before the committee to give witness to the events in question is Captain Sorkenal of the Boltian Assembly Navy. We realize that you have been home only three days but we wished to get

CAMPAIGN GUIDE: VICTORY BY ANY MEANS

your recollection of the events as soon as possible and we thank you for coming on such short notice."

As if I had a choice. "It is an unexpected honor to be able to speak with the committee."

"Indeed, usually only staff level officers are called before the committee," chimed in Ambassador Petmol, making it clear he considered Captain Sorkenal an underling, a very minor underling at that.

Ambassador Nelseloz came to his defense. "Captain Sorkenal's first hand testimony will be invaluable. Besides, we listened to a captain of your own navy who really had very little to say didn't we?"

Nice to see that I may have at least one ally on the committee, then again since Durken, Belzan, and Tolzeky jointly operate the Boltian Assembly Navy it's not that much of a surprise. With Verbanal still insisting on maintaining its own Navy, I wonder how Perton felt with only one committee member on his side.

The smile never slipped from Petmol's face but Sorkenal was good at reading body language, years of watching over his crew on months long missions, and he could tell the barb had scored. "Captain Perton reacted appropriately to the situation..."

"Please ambassadors," interjected Renmok, "can we hear Captain Sorkenal's testimony before concluding anything?"

Small nods of assent we made around the table and Renmok turned to Sorkenal, "Please recount the events to the best of your recollection beginning on the 4th day of Ulzel of this year."

"My ship..." Sorkenal began.

"That would be the Silent Star?" asked Gel.

"Yes sir. We were on routine surveillance of the MagHur..."

"You call spying on the MagHur without their knowledge 'routine'?" asked Tenaz angrily.

Sorkenal was taken aback for a second, not sure how to respond until Gel came to his aid. "I will remind the Ambassador from Gurelon that clandestine monitoring of the MagHur system was fully endorsed by her predecessor after the unfortunate first contact incident with them ten years ago."

"I do not object to the monitoring of the MagHur, quite the contrary," replied Tenaz. "I do however object that the funds for the operation are still being drawn from the Assembly general fund rather than the appropriate military account as my predecessor failed to realize. Gurelon and all other nations not directly participating in the Boltian Assembly Navy are therefore unjustly paying a higher than necessary percentage of the bill for this continuing operation."

"GMA ships enjoy the fruits of this operation do they not? In fact as I recall most of the ships allowed on the periodic trading missions to the MagHur are Gurelon are they not?"

"Ambassadors again," Renmok pleaded, "let us

not waste Captain Sorkenal's time by hashing up old issues that can be discussed another time. Please continue Captain."

The voice of reason, must be why he's the chair of this committee. The truth was that Tolzeky was the only nation currently neutral enough to be agreed upon by all parties. Odd considering they had once tried to take over the Durken colony on Verbanal, but that was long ago and Verbanal was an independent nation now.

"At 14.73 Central Command Time we picked up an energy reading consistent with an Extra Dimensional Travel transit point. We quickly conferred with Captain Perton aboard the Vigilant Eye, who were in close proximity at the time."

"What did your conference conclude?" asked Renmok.

"After verifying that the reading was indeed accurate, in other words making sure it was not a system malfunction by making sure both ships picked it up, we were able to conclude two things: A) it was not any form of heretofore unknown naturally occurring space phenomenon, that it was indeed an unknown ship using EDT and B) by comparing readings from the two ships we were able to determine its travel vector was 175 degrees off of the best path course to Melkon, the nearest Boltian mapped world, and 130 degrees off path from any Boltian mapped world."

"We've already heard all this from Captain Perton", remarked Petmol. "Can we move ahead a little?"

"I for one am very interested in what Captain Sorkenal has to say", said Nelseloz, "and confirmation of Perton's report is worth hearing."

"The sensor logs validate Captain Perton's story," snapped Petmol.

"Yes but they don't explain the process that turned those logs into action," Nelseloz replied smoothly. "Please go on Captain."

"Yes sir. Captain Perton and I agreed that we needed to remain and monitor the situation further. We wished to remain undetected so we maximized passive sensors and stayed well away from the unknown vessel. It made a direct course for Mahon, the MagHur homeworld. We monitored no communications to or from the unknown vessel. The MagHur navy, which as I am sure you all know is large if not advanced, gathered over Mahon to meet the intruder. At 3.21 on the 7th the unknown vessel entered proximity of Mahon. Suddenly, and without warning, the unknown ship opened fire with energy weapons of unknown type. As the unknown ship went active we were able to get more accurate reading on it. It was larger than the MagHur vessels, which already dwarf our cruisers. By 3.30 it had destroyed all MagHur military ships in orbit of Mahon. It then went on to destroy the entire MagHur supply force, used

to supply the MagHur colony on Dihon, and all satellites in orbit of Mahon. By 3.62 not a single object other than the unknown vessel was in orbit of Mahon. Needless to say Captain Perton and I were shocked. We conferred on what to do at this point and we decided that one ship should remain to watch the situation and the other should bring reinforcements."

"How did you decide which vessel should remain?" asked Nelseloz.

"Captain Perton seemed very insistent that he be the one to go for help. In all honesty I think he was slightly afraid and wanted to get out."

"We are not interested in your opinion Captain," Petmol stated forcefully.

"On the contrary," shot back Gel. "Captain Sorkenal is a highly trained and experienced officer of the Assembly Navy. His opinion should be given the respect it is due."

Renmok raised his hand to forestall any further argument and motioned for Sorkenal to continue.

"It took Captain Perton nearly a week to move his ship to where his EDT signature would not be detected. Then for the next three weeks the invading ship merely orbited Mahon. At the end of that period the MagHur launched a massive counter attack using their ground based drones. As you know the MagHur drones are roughly equivalent to our fighters although of course they are much more primitive. The sheer number of drones seemed to set the invaders back a bit before they launched their own small craft. The invader's small craft were effective in fighting off the MagHur drones, although I got the feeling that the invader's craft were not designed for space superiority missions, an assumption later proved correct. The invader repelled the assault, and less than a week later the same small craft were deployed to land troops on Mahon."

"Do you feel the invaders may be susceptible to attacks from more advanced fighter craft such as our own?" questioned Renmok.

"I believe in sufficient numbers they would be, yes."

Renmok nodded sagely and motioned for Sorkenal to continue.

"Four weeks after the invader landed their ground troops what little communications we intercepted from Mahon seemed to indicate that the invading ground forces were having as little trouble as their ships had had. MagHur resistance seemed negligible by that point. That was then the joint fleet of both Assembly Navy and Verbanal Navy ships under the command of Admiral Daral arrived. The Admiral held a meeting of senior officers and representatives from both the Assembly and Verbanal. I was called to report what we had observed since Captain Perton had left. There was much debate about what course of action to take but a peaceful attempt at negotiation was insisted on by the civilian representatives. Admiral Daral

CAMPAIGN GUIDE: VICTORY BY ANY MEANS

ordered us to set course for home as the stress of more than two months of observing the invader undetected was getting to my crew. The fleet set course for Mahon and we moved further out of the system to remain undetected as we went EDT. As we left the system the fleet was just passing Dihon."

"What was the mood after the decision for negotiation was reached?" asked Tenaz.

"In my opinion," Sorkenal ventured with a glace at Petmol, "the admiral felt that the invader had already shown a hostile disposition from their unprovoked attack on the MagHur. He felt a show of strength more appropriate. However the negotiators prevailed upon him to go along with their plan."

"So you think peaceful negotiation was a mistake?" questioned Petmol.

"The invader had systematically destroyed every vestige of MagHur orbital power and then proceeded to prosecute an effective ground assault. Unknown ships advancing from outskirts of the system would probably have provoked them even more. I think the idea of peace is good but the timing of the event was poor."

"So you would condemn the MagHur to destruction without a second thought?" Tenaz half questioned, half accused.

"My primary concern was, and continues to be, the safety of the Boltian people. Interfering with a violent and obviously powerful alien race as they conduct an attack on a people we barely maintain diplomatic ties to seems a foolish risk to me."

"But earlier you said that Admiral Daral wanted a show of strength. Wouldn't that have provoked them for sure?" pressed Petmol.

Sorkenal was tired of being prodded, especially by Petmol, and so his response was heated and direct. That, of course, was the whole point in provoking him.

"I never said I agreed with Admiral Daral's plan either. I think both were equally foolish. I had spent over ten weeks watching the destruction. I would have either left immediately or waited on the outskirts of the system for a better time to approach."

"Thank you Captain Sorkenal," stated Renmok. "We very much appreciate your time."

Sorkenal knew a dismissal when he heard one. He promptly stood, retrieved his hat, and brushed past the assistant, who was just opening the door from the other side. What are they not saying?

Once the captain was gone Renmok signaled the technician, who had ceased recording the second Sorkenal had stood, dismissing him also. When the five-committee members were alone Nelseloz was the first to speak.

"So it seems the Verbanal plan to negotiate was doomed to failure from the beginning," she accused.

"In the opinion of one lowly captain," Petmol shot back. "Not like your shoot-first-ask-questions-later admiral helped at all."

"Admiral Daral is a respected commander, besides he was the ranking officer in the field," Gel defended.

"We could have found someone a little more 'calm' instead," offered Tenaz.

"We couldn't waste the time," returned Gel. "When Perton fled the scene..."

"Now wait a minute, Perton acted responsibly to..." interrupted Petmol. "...fled the scene," Gel continued undaunted, "instead of going to the nearest military facility, which is only one EDT jump away from Melkon, he came here to Boltia, which takes two EDT jumps. Admiral Daral was already on training maneuvers on the outskirts of the system and so the time Perton wasted coming here had to be made up by immediately dispatching Daral. Captain Perton acted irresponsibly."

"We waited long enough to allow Verbanal ships to join Admiral Daral. Couldn't we have waited for a different commander?" asked Tenaz.

"So you suggest that we had removed Admiral Daral from command of his own fleet on the eve of a crisis?"

"No but..."

"I took the liberty," interrupted Petmol successfully this time, "of obtaining Admiral Daral's academy records. It seems that first contact was one of his weakest areas and his aggressive inclinations were well known. It seems the Durken/Belzan tradition of warmongering continues."

Nelseloz rose to her feet in anger. "How dare you accuse us of..."

Gel placed his hand on Nelseloz's shoulder, gently urging her back to her seat. "Regardless of Admiral Daral's possible shortcomings we must remember that he did not have final authority over the mission. It was the Verbanal insistence on civilian diplomats who obviously hamstringed the Admiral's evaluation of the situation."

"We all agreed that professional diplomats were needed for a situation this delicate," said Renmok.

"Based on Captain Perton's now obviously stilted view of the situation," replied Gel.

"Regardless, we are not solving the problem," pleaded Renmok. "Obviously we cannot let word of the battle leak out yet. Regardless of any mistakes he may have made," he raised his hand to forestall any more argument on that point, "he was wise to use his fastest ship to send us word immediately after the fighting ceased. We must continue our quarantine that ship and wait to speak with Admiral Daral in person. Hopefully something can be salvaged of this situation."

* * *

B5 Campaign Guide Shipyards

THE siblings of the Generic Medium Shipyard first posted as a Ship of the Month, each of the Big Four were originally slated to have personalized shipyards included with the release of the Babylon 5 Wars campaign guide source materials.

The last revision of these shipyards took into consideration the heated debate and feedback from the Medium Shipyard's time as the Ship of the Month. Overall, the shipyards saw a massive reduction in offensive firepower in order to curb potential player abuse.

The campaign guide shipyards come in three varieties: heavy, medium, and light. The larger the shipyard the larger the ship it can berth/construct and more resilient it is to damage. For the most part, heavy shipyards are massive complexes that can take enormous amounts of punishment before being destroyed. In contrast, light shipyards are poorly equipped to defend themselves and can be easily destroyed.

One potential point of conflict that still remains with these shipyard designs is that most of their weapons systems are mounted in the primary section. The original reason for this design was two fold: first, the outer sections are meant to represent the girders and outer bracings that make up much of the shipyard's overall mass; secondly, there were some ship control sheets that having one weapon per section either was too much firepower or just wouldn't fit on the sheet!

You will also notice a naming conflict that has arisen from the release of Showdowns-10, as all of the Earth Alliance shipyards are named for the Greek god Hephaestus, the black smith of the gods. I felt that it was fitting for the name to be applied to the shipyards where the Earth Alliance built their ships.

What good are these shipyards? As with tenders and repair ships, these shipyards would rarely be seen in combat scenarios and would be relegated to campaigns and scenarios in which they were targeted.

* * *

(SCS's for these shipyards can be found in the Attachments file)

Commentary on my Campaign Rules

M Sean Martinez (Bandit)

The Vision

I RECALL fondly the day on the B5 Wars e-mail list when Bruce Graw told us about the campaign rules his group had used in the studio. Originally he said they were used during product play testing to make the individual battles mean more. Several questions were asked and the list was given what would become the backbone of the campaign rule set I would write. Over the next year my rule set would go from a meager 10 pages to over 80 with the current public release version. That covers 80% of the rules set. The remaining rules will be released in the near future.

I always felt that a campaign system for any game should be as complex and detailed as possible. It needs to allow the group to use any of the original system's optional rules. The key focus should be on allowing players to have unique and fun space battles that mean something. A lost major battle should leave the loser open to a counter attack or possibly even an invasion of a key system. However it should also be set up in such a way that you could go beyond the specific details if you want to and still maintain a good level of flavor of the rules.

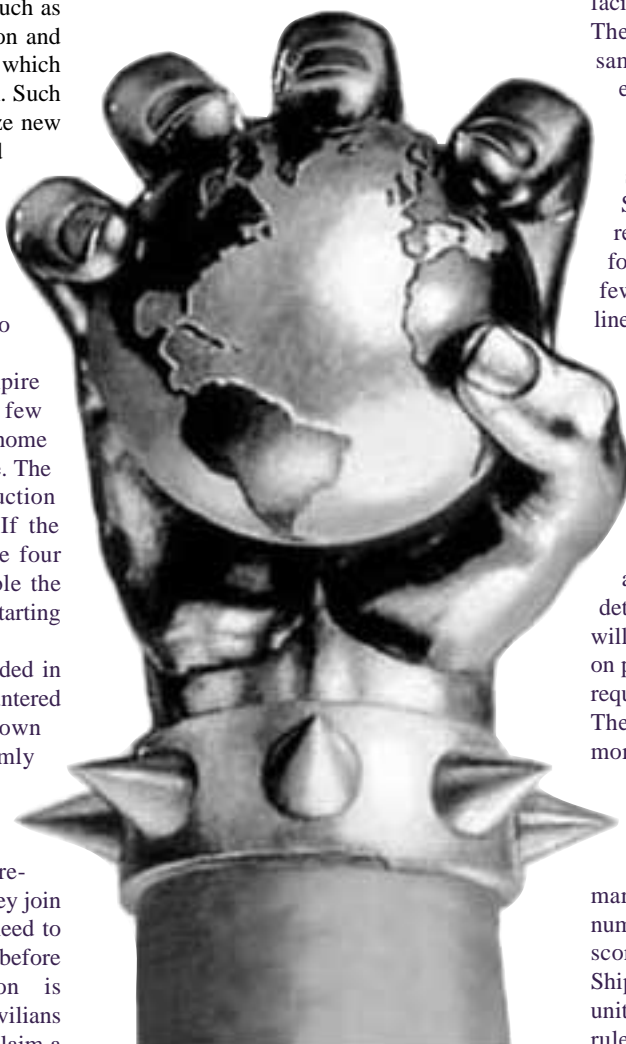
Overview

My campaign rules are essentially the same concept as any of the classic 4X games such as Master of Orion 2, Birth of the Federation and most recently Master of Orion 3. All of which were part of the inspiration for the system. Such games require you to explore and colonize new systems, utilize the resources present and then wage a glorious space war against your neighbors until you are the only empire remaining. What are the 4Xs you may ask? They are eXploration, eXpansion, eXploitation, and eXtermination. A fifth "X" was added to my system that dealt with eXperience.

In the current game set up every empire starts with a moderately sized fleet, a few systems, and a starbase to protect their home planet. Each system also has a Jump Gate. The players each get a number of production facilities to spread over their empire. If the player happens to be playing one of the four major powers then they start with double the number of systems and a bonus to their starting fleet size and resources.

There are 6 different planet types included in the campaign. Five of these can be encountered during exploration and each has its own unique set of stats. Each planet randomly generates an amount of income, ore and maintenance. Some planets may have Q-40 deposits. It is possible to encounter a system where there is a pre-space race living on a planet. Generally they join the first race that encounters them. You need to have an ELINT vessel survey a system before colonization can occur. Colonization is abstracted and done by the legions of civilians that you do not have to worry about. To claim a

COLONIZE & CONQUER



system all you need to do is build a Jump Gate in it. I realize that is not realistic but it allows for fast game play.

Game play is done in turns. Each turn the player can build ships, fighters, missiles, marine units or additional production yards. They can also explore nearby star systems. Each system that is encountered has a chance of having something unusual such as the ruins of an alien civilization. Controlling such planets allows the empire an edge in one technology that they can research. Players can also engage in diplomatic actions and form alliances and trade agreements with their neighbors.

Fleet sizes are limited by the amount of maintenance that the empire generates and then they are further restricted by deployment restrictions. Ships require ore, credits and Q-40 to construct. Construction also takes several turns based on the size of the ship. A ship the size of a White Star would take 2 turns to construct while an EA Omega would take almost 8 turns. A single turn is approximately 2 weeks, which was done to emulate the 22 episode year of Babylon 5 TV show. With the basic maintenance levels it is impossible to get extremely large fleets. Fleet Action has the EA fleet at 1300+ vessels. If you had the same number of systems in a campaign the EA might be able to support about half of those vessels. 700 to 800 ships and fighters are a lot more manageable.

Fleets that see combat actions can earn experience which when enough has accumulated will earn the ship expert officers. There are also facilities that can be used to train expert officers. The rules prevent abuse by not allowing the same officer to be selected from the facility every time and it takes time to produce such officers.

Empires also need to keep supply lines and supply depots active to support a war effort. Supply lines allow fighters and missiles to be replaced easily. The loss of a supply depot will force the empire to cease their operations for a few turns. Enemy units can also raid supply lines.

Combat can be handled with B5 wars or with Fleet Action. The rules were written with B5 Wars in mind since when they were conceived Fleet Action was just a neat sounding idea. Each fleet is given orders during each turn that aid in the set up of any potential combat encounters. Their senior capabilities and size of fleet also makes a difference because of the detection rules. A fleet jumping into a system will most likely be detected while a smaller fleet on patrol might not be detected. The set up rules require a neutral third party to implement well. The combat section also includes rules for morale, fighter missile stockpiles, when ramming can be allowed, fighter pilot survivability and for abandoning ship.

There is a quick system for planetary assault and bombardment. Essentially each marine unit rolls a die against a base target number depending on circumstances. If a hit is scored one of the enemy units is destroyed. Ships can use their weapons to cripple ground units, industry or fighter bases. There are also rules for using weapons of mass destruction.

Even after a planet has been conquered there is a chance that guerilla units will harass the occupying forces. Naturally rules for escaping refugees have been touched on.

Another aspect of the game system is research of new technologies. A technology requires a number of Research Points to acquire. Research Points are generated at science centers and outposts. Exploration ships can also generate them. All of the ship enhancements from the Rules Compendium are covered along with some new ones created by me. Each was given a research cost. There are also rules that stipulate how long it takes for a ship enhancement to become standardized and generally deployed in a fleet.

There is also an extensive set of espionage and intelligence rules. Any true campaign needs to cover this vital area and it was the most difficult to write. Each agent has his or her own set of stats. The stats cover such things as combat capability, loyalty, gathering intelligence abilities and sabotage abilities. Additionally each race's agents have their own set of bonuses and special abilities. For example Pak'ma'ra agents can freely bypass security at customs due to their undesirable qualities. There are 13 missions that an espionage agent can perform. These missions are anything from gathering military movement information to technology theft.

Each planet and empire also tracks the level of civil unrest. Unrest can be lowered or raised based on actions and most races have tendencies that change the base amount of unrest lost or gained. For example Abbai gain 2 additional points of unrest if they declare war on another race but lose -1 additional unrest for signing a peace treaty. High levels of unrest can slow down production and could lead to civil war. The civil war rules were modeled after the EA civil war and the empire is randomly split into two forces, a loyalist force and a rebel force. The player gets to choose which side he will continue to play and the GM will take control of the other side.

Diplomacy is handled through an ambassador. The system covers the basic treaty types along with rules for diplomatic transports, sanctions and alliances. Further in the rules for enacting planetary options such as utilizing strip mining for greater production or raising taxes for more income. You can even declare martial law to lower unrest.

Loose rules for creating your own ships and variants are also included. I was reluctant to include them since I personally never liked the idea of players creating their own variants. Typically they want to get new weapons, usually their favorite, and outfit their perfectly good ships with them. The guidelines are not as intensive as I originally wanted but work overall.

Let's also not forget raiders! If left unchecked raider groups can become an annoyance in an empire's growth. In our campaign the Abbai government suffered a lot of set backs when several raider groups moved into their territory and they had problems intercepting them fast enough.

Finally there are rules for differences in races. Some races get bonuses to their production, others get bonuses to how quickly they earn

experience and others start with some bonus technology or perhaps another unique bonus. Rules for GMing the Shadows and Vorlons have been included. Truthfully the Shadows are close to being a playable race.

Complexity

Overall my set of rules is fairly complex looking but once you get used to the system it becomes easy to fully utilize. There is a lot of randomization that makes keeping track of everything more difficult that I had intended. I find using an Excel spreadsheet greatly speeds up turn processing. Ideally a GM should run the campaign and process the turns, which some groups may not like.

Cutting Room Floor

Unfortunately even though I included anything I thought might be needed in an extensive campaign rules set a few things never made it into the rules. The colonization rules never got more complex and the rule set completely ignores civilian population. Several of the final AOG races never got rules written for use in my campaign. Also 3 of the 4 game type set-ups never were finalized beyond scribbling them down on my idea pad. I did have a nice set of random events but those never were placed into the document available online as they were still deep in playtest.

The Future

Several groups e-mailed me their thoughts on my rules and gave me some new ideas to improve upon them. In May 2003 I will release the 6th version of my campaign rules. This version is a much more streamlined version of my current rules set. I removed the majority of the random die rolls for production and added in all of the missing components such as colonization rules, additional set up rules and the missing races. I have new rules for ship modification that are more restrictive and better balanced. The new ship construction rules will allow an empire to construct and maintain the size of fleets presented in the Fleet Action books with no problem. Additionally there will be tracking sheets for your empire, several quick reference charts and 4 pregenerated maps included this time around. There will also be a separate book of campaign specific SCSs such as Tenders and Colony Ships released at the same time. Ideally the rules should be playable without a GM, but I'm not entirely sure as of yet. The rules for Intelligence gathering and exploration still require a neutral 3rd party.

After the 6th edition there will be two planned supplements. The first will cover historical campaign set ups for the B5 universe. The second will cover some of the races included in BABCOM and the Ancients making them playable as campaign empires. No release dates have been set for either set.

The 6th edition of the rules will make my rule set the most complete campaign rules available for Babylon 5. You could use the newest rules for just about any space combat system on the market since they have become more generalized and versatile. The best part is the rules will be available freely at my website:

<http://www.big-freaky-sean.ws>

B5W planetary facilities



GENERIC GROUND BATTERY By SCOTT McGAFFIN

THIS facility is meant to represent a typical heavy ground based weapon installation. It is not meant to be the end-all be-all of ground based weaponry. It could be used in a campaign as an alternative, or in addition to, orbiting bases and OSATs.

Some of the armour ratings and all the sensor ratings have been left blank (similar to Wars of the Centauri Republic). Also the actual weapon batteries have been left blank. The actual composition of these three categories varies by race and is detailed in the spreadsheet included in the attachments folder. Also note that certain races' facilities will have additional systems such as reload racks and shields, this will be noted in the spreadsheet. The SCS has 6 Secondary Weapon locations and 4 Primary Weapon locations, if there are not as many weapons as locations, then the extra locations are assumed not to exist. They are not free empty locations.



GENERIC CIVILIAN OUTPOST By SCOTT McGAFFIN

The civilian outpost is meant to represent a small outpost located on an airless moon or planet. It gives the players an actual solid recordable target to shoot at or protect. It could very easily be used as an objective in a scenario or it could be used to represent a world's initial colony prior to full blown colonization in a campaign. The SCS is meant to be a generic SCS usable by any race. Players may want to tweak the SCS depending on their needs. For example a Minbari outpost could have higher sensors, or a Cascor outpost could have a small one-flight fighter bay.

(SCSs in Attachments folder)

FLEET ACTION CAMPAIGN SYSTEM

By **ADRIAN COOMBS-HOAR**

WHY a Fleet Action campaign guide? Why not would be my reply? Ok, so Fleet Action is dead and buried isn't it, some out there would say. Well not in my opinion. No, there is still a great deal of potential for Fleet Action and that's why I decided to put together a campaign guide for those many players still persevering with FA.

What's the rationale behind the various sections of the Guide? I have revisited the DVD's and videotapes I have of the Babylon 5 TV series as a whole, as well as re-reading the books I have about the series. I thought to myself, is there a way of representing the essence of the TV series in a large scale or even strategic game format? The answer appeared to be an emphatic yes! The series had a very strategic feel to it, with the long plot and the various strands that were unveiled throughout the series. Using many of the features I saw and read about Babylon 5, I was able to come up with the various components of the Guide. I was also aware that the core of FA was based on the Babylon 5 Wars game and I therefore resolved to incorporate those features in that game system that I felt would benefit FA.

The campaign guide gives enough information for players of all abilities to quickly set up a campaign and get it going with the minimal amount of time. I have attempted to make the system simple yet enjoyable within the context of the FA framework. I have found that those players without opponents can set up a solo campaign with any number of Empires, and it still plays fairly quickly.

I have also tried to steer the players into exploring other areas of campaigns other than the 'lets head to the enemy and fight' approach! That's why Trading Posts and cargo ships have become such an important element of the Guide. Let's take the section on Espionage as an example. Players may question why having a Trading Post or cargo ships in the other Empires' systems gives a bonus to the base score of their Espionage attempts. If you watch the TV series you will quickly find that traders and merchants are the prime source of most of the espionage which is carried on throughout the galaxy. Unlike the military vessels of the Empires in the TV series, merchants and traders can literally go anywhere they like in their cargo ships. Therefore, they will be able to pick up all kinds of intelligence on their travels. Trading Posts are a hive of

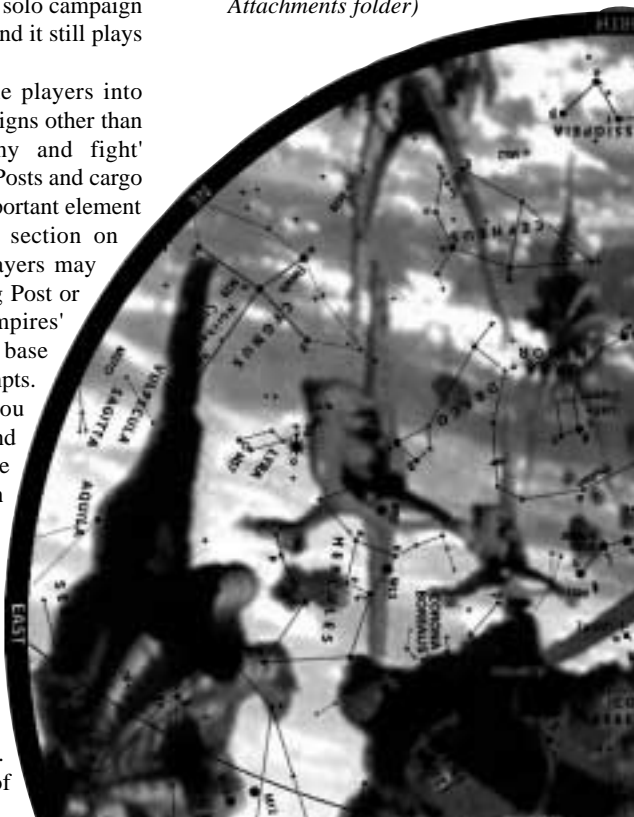
activity and rumours, lots of both trade and gossip passes between the merchants who move through the Posts.

Similarly, with the section on Raiders I have allowed the various Empires to bid for the services of Raider Squadrons as in at least one episode of the TV series it was revealed that one of the Major powers had hired the services of a Raider group to disrupt the space lanes of one of the other Empires.

I have also given the Minor Powers in the game an opportunity of exerting an influence over the Major Powers. To this end I came up with the idea of Economic warfare and the Galactic Stock Market. The League of Non-Aligned Worlds now comes into its own, by themselves on an individual basis they cannot possibly challenge any of the Major Powers. However, if they unify to take turns to conduct economic warfare against a Major Power they can literally force that Major Power to its knees by wrecking its economy and forcing it to give concessions to the LNAW. The LNAW cannot flex their collective muscles too much though, as it could encourage the Major Power to come and 'visit' them with its military forces!

So, all in all, what I have tried to create is a Guide that allows players of FA a way of moving away from purely tabletop battles and to explore the richness of what the galaxy out there has to offer. It will be the players of FA who will judge whether I have succeeded or not.

(A copy of the campaign system is in the Attachments folder)



Fleet Action 1 FAQ

By **ALEX ROBERTS**

BABCOM is including in this issue the compiled Fleet Action 1 FAQ. More than just a listing of errata, the FAQ includes numerous common questions on play and rules interpretations. It is an essential aid for playing Fleet Action 1, and covers all four published Agents of Gaming Fleet Action supplements: "The Core Rulebook", "My Enemy My Ally", "To The Victor" and "Of Aliens and Giants".

The FAQ has had a long and storied history. The ball initially got rolling with the help of Alex Roberts, Greg Ernest, and Chris Lowrey, all of whom provided questions and rule issues their respective groups had encountered while playing Fleet Action 1. Where available, answers that had been given by Rob Glass and Bruce Graw were also compiled into the FAQ. Questions were also gathered on the b5wars.agentsofgaming.com forum, in an attempt to be as comprehensive as possible in providing a resource to help Fleet Action 1 players. Once all questions were compiled, the FAQ was forwarded to Rob Glass, to provide a definitive review and answers to those rule and unit questions the Fleet Action 1 community had raised.

The FAQ was finally completed by Rob Glass and posted on the Agents of Gaming website. Unfortunately, with the closing of Agents of Gaming, their site is no longer publicly available. In an effort to ensure this resource remains available for Fleet Action 1 players, it has been included in the attachments file along with this issue of Babcom. Thanks to all the players who contributed questions and issues and helped make the Fleet Action 1 FAQ a useful and comprehensive play aid.

Fleet Action 1 Squadron Control Sheet

ONE of the unfortunate casualties of Agents of Gaming's loss is their website, upon which numerous downloads and FAQs were hosted for B5Wars and Fleet Action. Amongst those files was one particularly important file for playing Fleet Action 1, the Squadron Control Sheet. The Squadron Control Sheet allows players to note down their squadron's ship selection, morale rating and roll points, elint abilities, command abilities, as well as plotting the movements of each squadron before each turn.

The Squadron Control Sheet was intended to have been included in the first Fleet Action 1 core rules book, but sadly was accidentally left out of the print run. Thus, players had to rely on the Agents of Gaming website in order to get this necessary play aid.

Babcom has included this PDF Squadron Control Sheet in this month's attachment file, to ensure that both older players who may have misplaced their file, as well as newcomers to the Fleet Action 1 game can still have access to this valuable and important game sheet.



B5W TACTICS

Part Three: By Todd Boyce

SO far I've discussed short ranged races and long ranged races, but these are classifications that for some races are not so obvious. Some readers may argue that the Drazis are a medium ranged race due to most of their weapons having a -1 per 2 hex range penalty. Since the Vree can fire A-M Cannons at fairly long range, many would think they would average out to being medium ranged as well.

The Drazis almost always have to fight in medium to close range because they have no long ranged weapons in their arsenal. The Vree also want to be close because their to-hit numbers make a big difference in the amount of damage they do, which directly affects their effectiveness. This somewhat lack of flexibility means they tend to do better when employing only the short-range tactics described in the first article. When they try to use long-range tactics they tend to be outclassed by those races that are truly long ranged and also by those that are best at mixed range fighting.

This is where this article comes in, because it deals with mixed range races. These races have ships and weapons covering all ranges of combat, and because of that their tactics tend to be different than those that mostly fall into one range bracket for optimum effectiveness.

There are some newer races that could be exceptions (like the Ipsha and Balosians for example) but I don't have enough experience with them yet to know how they fit into the scope of these articles. As a guess I'd simply use one of the strategies presented and adjust the engagement distance to match the best effective range of the race in question.

For any race, control of the center and control of the opponent are the goals.

JACK-OF-ALL-TRADES

Many races are jacks-of-all-trades meaning they have a mixture of weaponry for every range. The Earth Alliance is one such race. They utilize HLs for their long range combat, HPCs and RCs for medium ranges and MPCs and SPBs for close range work. Add to this a variety of ballistics that covers all ranges. Most of their ships mount an array of these weapons but none in enough significance across the fleet to bracket them within a specific range where they are most effective. The Narn, Gaim, Abbai, Dilgar, certain Centauri fleet compositions, and many others also generally fall into this category.

It is also possible for a traditionally long or short ranged player to tweak his ship selection in order to make a mixed range fleet, just as it's possible to make long or short range fleets out of a traditionally mixed range race. For any race, the fleet composition impacts the tactics employed.

Just like weapons and fleet compositions are mixed, tactics for these fleets are mixed as well. However they are really just modifications and combinations of the tactics already discussed.

The Three Fleets

There are three main fleet compositions that it seems most players use. Of these three there are

many variations but they almost always fall into one of the three when employing tactics.

ARMADA Fleet One

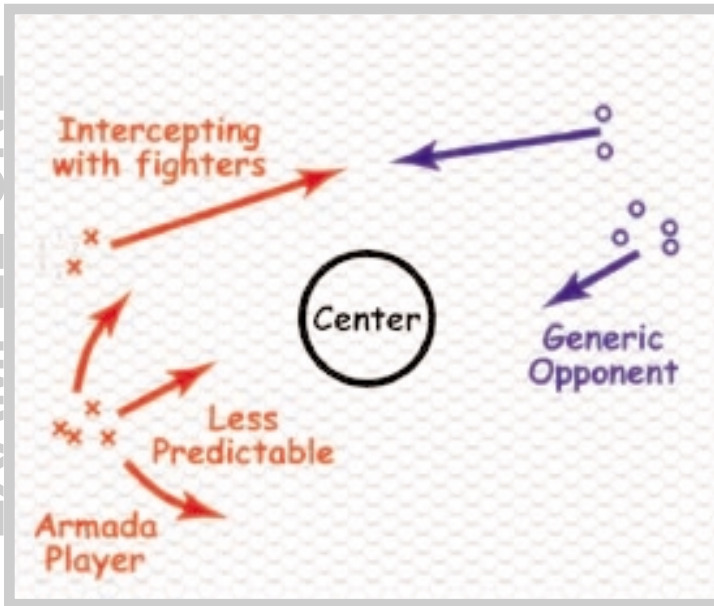
This is the ultimate in mixed fleets and is reminiscent of wet-navy battle fleets. The armada type fleet has an even mixture of Capital Ships, HCVs and Medium Ships as well as fighters and it fights as one cohesive unit. Many League races are designed around this concept as well as the Narn and Dilgar, but the EA and Centauri are flexible enough to employ this kind of composition as well. This type of fleet is also typical for both short ranged and long ranged races but the mixed range races are the ones that benefit most.

This type of fleet typically plods across the map in a steady fashion engaging the opponent every step of the way and grinding them down. The smaller ships and fighters are used as interceptors if the opponent is using flankers or strike fighters, as close-in support against fighter or small ship assault, or simply as supplemental firepower to the larger ships in the fleet. In this way the composition is flexible enough to counter whatever strategy the opponent is employing.

Armada Tactics

With an armada type fleet, tactics to control the center resemble that of the short ranged fleet, but the combat itself is more in the form of a withering barrage of fire rather than a close range attack run. This makes them less

EXAMPLE ONE



predictable overall since there isn't a target range they are trying to achieve.

(See Example 1)

During the first part of the battle, EW usage is like that of the long ranged tactics except the intent is often to move toward the center of the map. This is usually done more slowly than the short ranged tactics indicate. Manipulations of the opponent are done at this stage with a combination of EW allocation and long-range fire. Most of the escorts would have mostly DEW with possibly some CCEW allocated if enemy fighters are present. Fighters at this point are usually sent ahead of the fleet to engage fringe units and/or intercept enemy fighters as well as do their own form of manipulation (possible material for a future article).

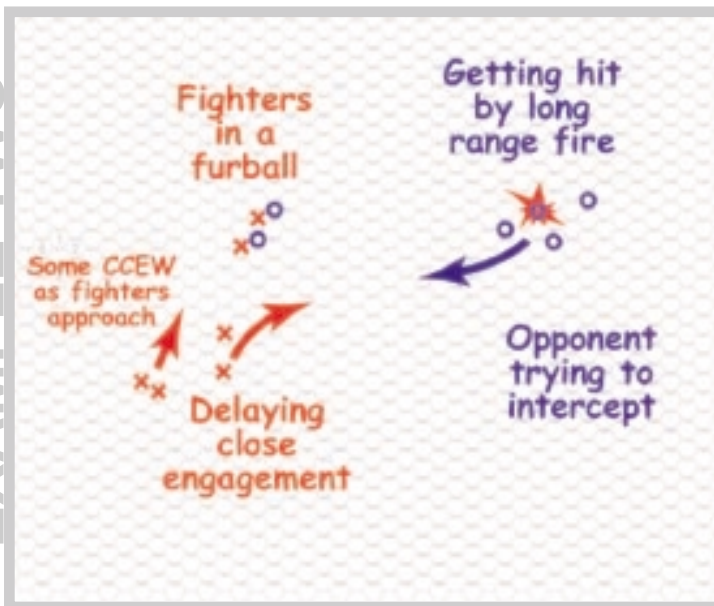
(See Example 2)

If desired during the mid-game, some maneuvers may be performed to further delay the approach to the center, which gives time for the heavy hitting long-range guns to recharge for a medium range attack (optimally). This rarely works against short ranged races that usually approach quickly, but there's no point in not trying. As a worst case scenario, they're fired at point blank range. When medium range is reached, the ships with medium range weapons engage while those with long range weapons turtle or put up some CCEW to help protect the escorts from fighter attacks.

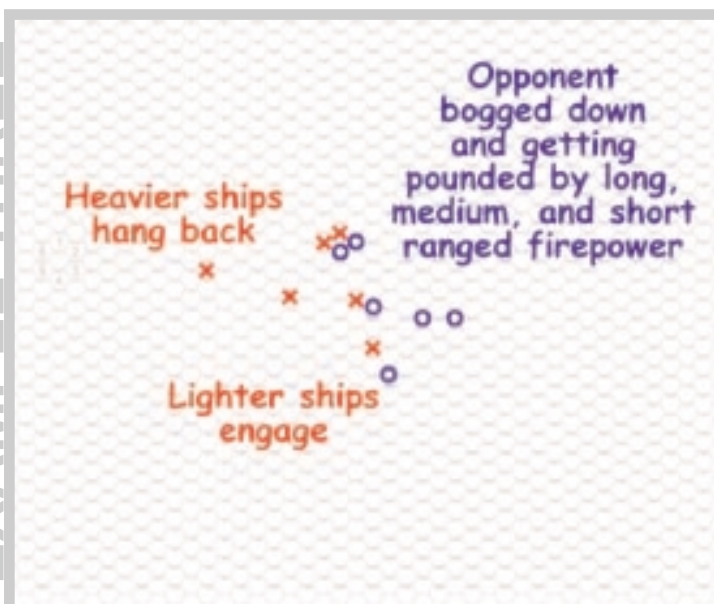
(See Example 3)

During the end-game, the battle generally varies between medium and short-range combat. It is often a good idea to have some heavier ships hanging back lending longer ranged fire support, as the other escorts engage the enemy at close range. By doing this, it makes the opponent's decision to break through the gauntlet of escorts in order to attack the rear-line units more difficult, since the escorts will be able to fire on the often-weaker aft sections should he do so.

EXAMPLE TWO



EXAMPLE THREE



SNIPER/WOLFPACK COMBINATION Fleet Two

This type of fleet is divided between the two main strategies; half of the fleet is dedicated as a long range sniper group and the other half is one or more short range brawler groups. While the sniper group supports the wolfpack by employing the tactics in the second article, the wolfpack in turn supports the snipers by directly manipulating and attacking the opponent. If necessary this kind of fleet can also form into an armada, as described above, once the opponent is in brawling range.

Together this combination of aspects forms a kind of one-two punch and flexibility that many single-tactic fleets can have difficulty countering. Many opponents become preoccupied with one aspect thereby leaving themselves open to attacks by the other. Many Centauri players excel using fleets of this kind.

Sniper/Wolfpack Tactics

The sniper and wolfpack combination uses a similar tactic as the long ranged races use. Since only half of the fleet (the wolfpack) is capable of controlling the center directly, it will be quickly outnumbered and outgunned if it tries to do so. Not only will they likely fail, it will cause the sniper half to fail, as they too get overwhelmed a few turns later. It becomes the divide and conquer theory except on the receiving end. To overcome this problem, the wolfpack is treated like another long ranged weapons system or perhaps like an ambiguous threat zone that can be used to harass and manipulate the opponent.

(See Example 4)

The sniper group for the most part will use the same kind of tactics as described in the long-range tactics in the previous article. At least for now.

The wolfpack turtles as best as it can and begins to approach the enemy at medium to high speed. The opponent won't want this group to flank him or get behind him so he will likely maneuver to intercept with some or all of his forces. If the opponent has fighters, they will likely respond to this threat first depending on the composition of the wolfpack.

The wolfpack's main job is to force the opponent to use EW for offense or defense and manipulating him in order to give the snipers better chances to hit and more opportunities to fire, while reducing the ability of the opponent to strike back at the snipers effectively.

Their secondary job is to attack targets of opportunity, ships that are on the fringes and not well protected, and to perform surgical strikes that will weaken the opponent's ability to fight the snipers when they eventually close with them. This is the trickiest part because trying to do both of these while in close proximity is very

dangerous. Without the wolfpack, the sniper group is vulnerable but if they do their job well before they are destroyed, victory will be assured.

Sometimes it is best to turtle the sniper force in the first turn or two before the wolfpack becomes a threat. The opponent will usually expect a full lock-on by the ships with long range weapons and if he has long ranged weapons as well, will go fully offensive in return expecting decent chances to hit. By turtling, the player is denying the opponent a first strike opportunity, which would then allow him to more confidently concentrate on the wolfpack. During turn 2, the opponent will still be facing the threat of long-range fire but will also begin

to be threatened by the wolfpack. This may influence the opponent to fire his long-range weapons even when he has fairly poor chances to hit.

(See Example 5)

The opponent views the wolfpack as a threat once it is within striking range and will take actions to deal with it, often by going with full OEW. In response, sometimes it is better to mostly turtle (putting one or two OEW on prime targets) and circle with the wolfpack while striking with the snipers.

(See Example 6)



FIGHTER-HEAVY CARRIER FLEET Fleet Three

Naturally a fighter-heavy fleet has a large amount of its points tied up in fighters, usually instead of smaller escorts. Capital ships with fighter capacity form the core of the fleet and the fighters act both as escorts and as a strike force. While this is similar to a sniper/wolfpack, this sort of fleet works differently on a tactical standpoint due to the nature of fighter movement and combat.

The roles of interceptor, escort, flanker and strike force are all rolled into the fighters. Without them, the capital ships will be easy prey to an opponent's varied fleet and without the capital ships, the fighters are vulnerable to massed short-range fire. The mobility of the fighters allows them to switch roles quickly should a need arise.

Fighter-Heavy Tactics

In a way, tactics with a fighter-heavy fleet most

often resemble those employed by a sniper/wolfpack because it is rare that one fighter-heavy fleet faces another. The fighters become the wolfpack while the ships become the snipers. However, their role as a wolfpack is very different than those strategies suggested in the previous section.

(See Example 7)

In the first few turns, the fighters will usually be sent ahead of the fleet since they can move much faster than ships and are much less threatened by long range fire (to the point of really not being threatened at all). For this reason, unlike a regular sniper/wolfpack fleet, the fighters can be sent to the center of the map without fear of being overwhelmed. This is most often the case when facing fleets that don't have a lot of fighters since those opponents will most often be using their fighters in a defensive role.

By taking control of the center early in the game with the fighters, the ships can approach more slowly and perform their job of simply supporting the fighters. This gives the fighter-heavy fleet a quick advantage right from the start. Controlling the opponent is the next step.

(See Example 8)

The biggest difference between ships and fighters in terms of controlling the opponent is the threat zone. For ships and particularly smaller escorts, their heaviest threat zones are most often conical towards the front. This makes the strategies suggested for the ship-based wolfpack require a bit of finesse to manipulate the opponent.

COUPON

THE OTHER



BLUE MEAT

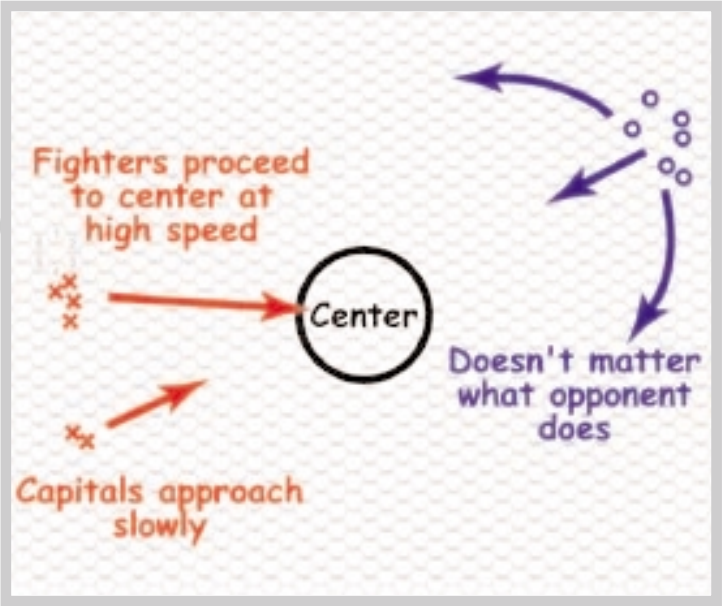
-TWO FOR ONE-

MFG Coupon
One Coupon Per Customer, Limit 24
Exp: 4/4/2261

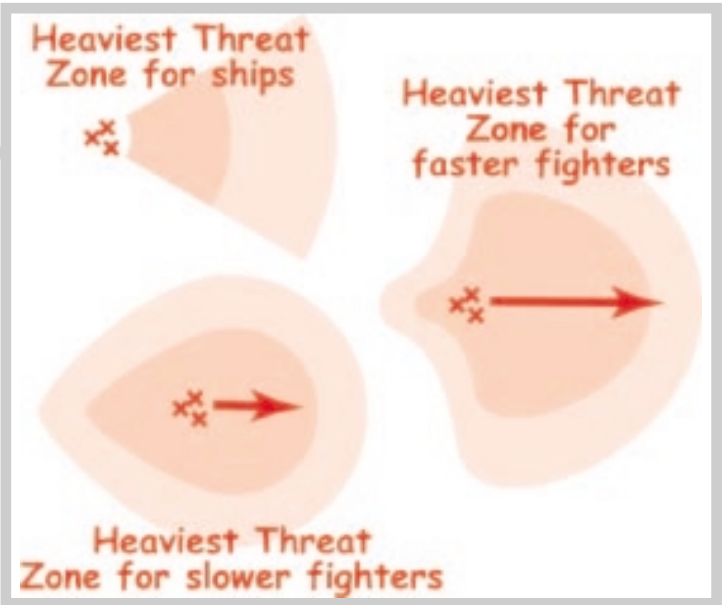
EXAMPLE SIX



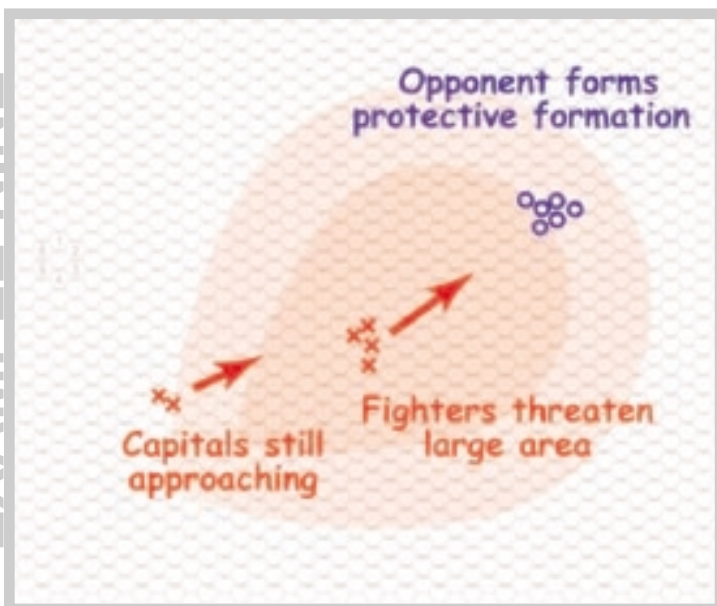
EXAMPLE SEVEN



EXAMPLE EIGHT



EXAMPLE NINE



(See Example 9)

Due to their mobility, fighter threat zones are much larger and more teardrop shaped. In general, the faster the fighters move, the more teardrop the shape becomes. This zone is often so large that the opponent generally won't be as concerned with trying to out-maneuver or evade their attacks since it would be futile anyway.

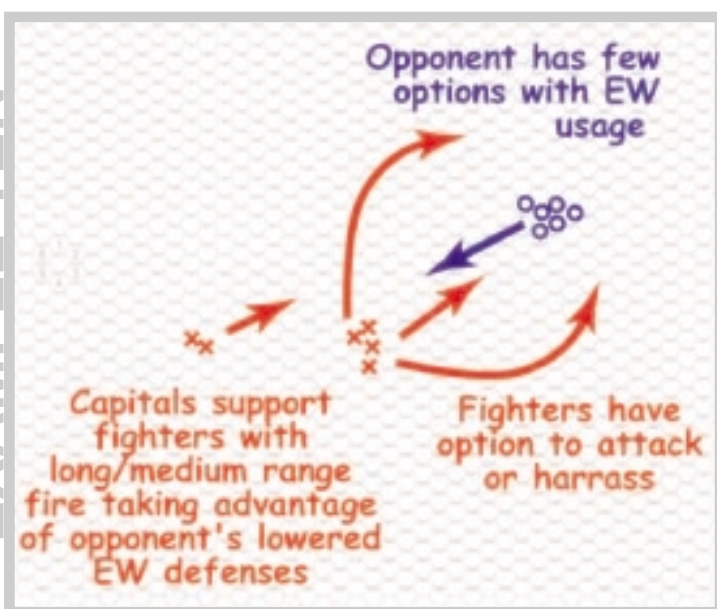
The opponent will usually maneuver his ships into a protective formation, often piling all of his ships into the same hex. Here begins how fighters are used to control the opponent.

(See Example 10)

The earlier the fighters get to within a threatening range, the earlier the opponent will usually begin tying up sensors with CCEW to counter them. This is where the fighters hurt the opponent the worst, not from the damage they do but from simply being an unpredictable threat. The opponent usually has few choices in this situation and none of them very desirable. He can concentrate on defending himself from the fighters, which makes him vulnerable to the player's ships. Or he can concentrate on destroying the player's ships, which makes him vulnerable to the player's fighters. Or he can split his EW between OEW, CCEW and DEW, which makes hitting ships or fighters both a mediocre prospect while being somewhat vulnerable to the opponent's ships.

(See Example 11)

EXAMPLE TEN



Not only does the opponent have the EW problem, ships that aren't protected are prime targets for fighter strikes. This means that the opponent has to make a fairly tight formation in order to threaten the fighters with a high level of anti-fighter fire. Once the opponent has a tight formation, he must maintain that formation and therefore is forced to become very predictable. He essentially forfeits any sort of initiative advantage since he has to telegraph his intentions with his lowest-initiative unit.

It is this predicament that makes the fighter-heavy fleet able to control the opponent better than any other fleet composition. This and the speed with which they can take control of the center make this kind of fleet particularly dangerous in the hands of a skilled player.

Here ends Part Three.

The next installment will cover fleet selection and the importance of a balanced force to successfully engage a variety of foes.

EXAMPLE ELEVEN



LCV TENDERS

An important unit in a campaign for navies that use Light Combat Vessels (LCVs) would be a LCV Tender. A Tender would be different than a Carrier in that the LCV(s) would dock to take on supplies, but would not be carried around by the Tender. Resupplying a LCV would be a function for in-between battles and would not ordinarily be performed under fire. A LCV Tender would not necessarily even need to be a dedicated ship as the conversion for cargo ships is simple and cheap and they are already designed for moving supplies.

The simplest LCV Tender is a freighter carrying modified pods for LCV docking and resupply. An existing pod can be modified for LCV docking for 10 Combat Points (CP) and a new docking pod can be bought for 20 CP. A freighter without pods can be modified for 10 CP per docking port. Only 1 docking port can be added per cargo bay and up to 2 LCVs can dock at a Tender at one time (one each on the port and starboard sides of the freighter). The docking ports are considered to be part of the cargo bay and are rendered inoperative after the bay has sustained 25% of the cargo boxes in damage. For every 20 cargo boxes in a pod/bay, the endurance for a LCV can be reset once. Thus an EA Commercial Freighter, without resupplying itself, can reset the endurance on one LCV 8 times, two LCVs 4 times, four LCVs 2 times, etc. Complete resupply of a LCV takes two hours including docking and undocking.

The following rules are for scenario purposes only, as LCV resupply is considered to take longer to perform than a scenario lasts and happens between battles similar to how the standard Whitestar self-repair works. If faced with combat, a Tender and LCV(s) would not dock until the combat was over and the area was clear of hostile forces. If the campaign permits LCV resupply combat, a roll of a 1 or 2 on a d20 on the day of LCV resupply would indicate that an attacking force has caught the Tender and LCV(s) during resupply operations (roll d100 to determine the amount of resupply cargo transferred to the LCVs).

To dock, a LCV and a Tender must be in the same hex, moving at the same speed and in the same direction. LCVs can only dock and undock during the Hanger Operations segment of the End of Turn Sequence. Any thrust used by either ship while docked destroys the docking mechanism and a ramming roll is made on the ramming results table (Rules Compendium page 145) for both ships. The first rake of damage vs. the Tender is applied to the cargo bay in question, but roll all other rakes normally. If a cargo pod with a LCV docking port is dropped as a covert resupply point, the same rules apply as if the cargo pod was a Tender. Use the number of undamaged cargo boxes as the ramming value for a pod that is rammed (due to using thrust) while docked.

A docked LCV blocks weapon arcs on the Tender and the LCV. Any weapon on the Tender on the side where a LCV is docked is blocked

from firing. (Ex. A LCV docked to the port side of a Bulk Freighter would block Standard Particle Beams (SPB) #3 and #4 from firing.) Weapons in the fore and aft sections cannot traverse past 90 degrees directly to the side of the ship. (Ex. Medium Plasma Cannon #1 on the above-mentioned Bulk Freighter would fire from the forward part of the arc to 90 degrees directly to port, reducing that arc to 90 degrees from its normal 120 degrees before docking.) A weapon in the primary section with 360-degree coverage is blocked from firing to the 120 degrees directly to the side that the LCV is docked. (Ex. A LCV docked to the port side of a Civilian Freighter has the SPB blocked to the 120 degrees directly to port, but the other 240 degrees would be open for firing.) For a LCV, only weapons on



the side away from a Tender and facing the 180 degrees away from the Tender may fire. (Ex. A BA Lt. Gunboat docked to the port side of a Tender could fire SPB #2 and the Interceptor in a 180-degree arc to the port side. Medium Blast Cannon #1 could fire to the port in a 90-degree arc. SPB #3 would be blocked from firing.)

Weapons fire targeted on a Tender that has a LCV docked, can re-roll at -4 vs. the LCV if it misses the ship and the reverse against the Tender for a LCV that is targeted. EW used against the first ship targeted is not applied to the second, but EW applied to the second will negate the doubled range penalties for no lock-on. Ex. An EA Tender (Civilian Freighter w/ modified LCV pods) has a BA Lt. Gunboat docked on the port side. A Raider Battlewagon at 10 hexes fires a Med. Laser at the Lt. Gunboat and misses. The raider did not allocate any EW

towards the Tender. It would re-roll to hit the Tender on a 1 (Profile 15, -2 DEW, 0 OEW, FC +2, Rng -10, -4 for re-roll). If the Raider Battlewagon had applied OEW vs. the Tender as well as the LCV, then the re-roll to hit the Tender would be 6 (Profile 15, -2 DEW, 0 OEW, FC +2, Rng -5, -4 for re-roll).

If a LCV is docked to a Tender at the start of a battle, then both ships will be Tactically Surprised as per the Rules Compendium on page 172 and neither ship can maneuver the first turn. A docked LCV cannot perform an undock until turn 2 during the normal Hanger Operations segment during the End of Turn Sequence.

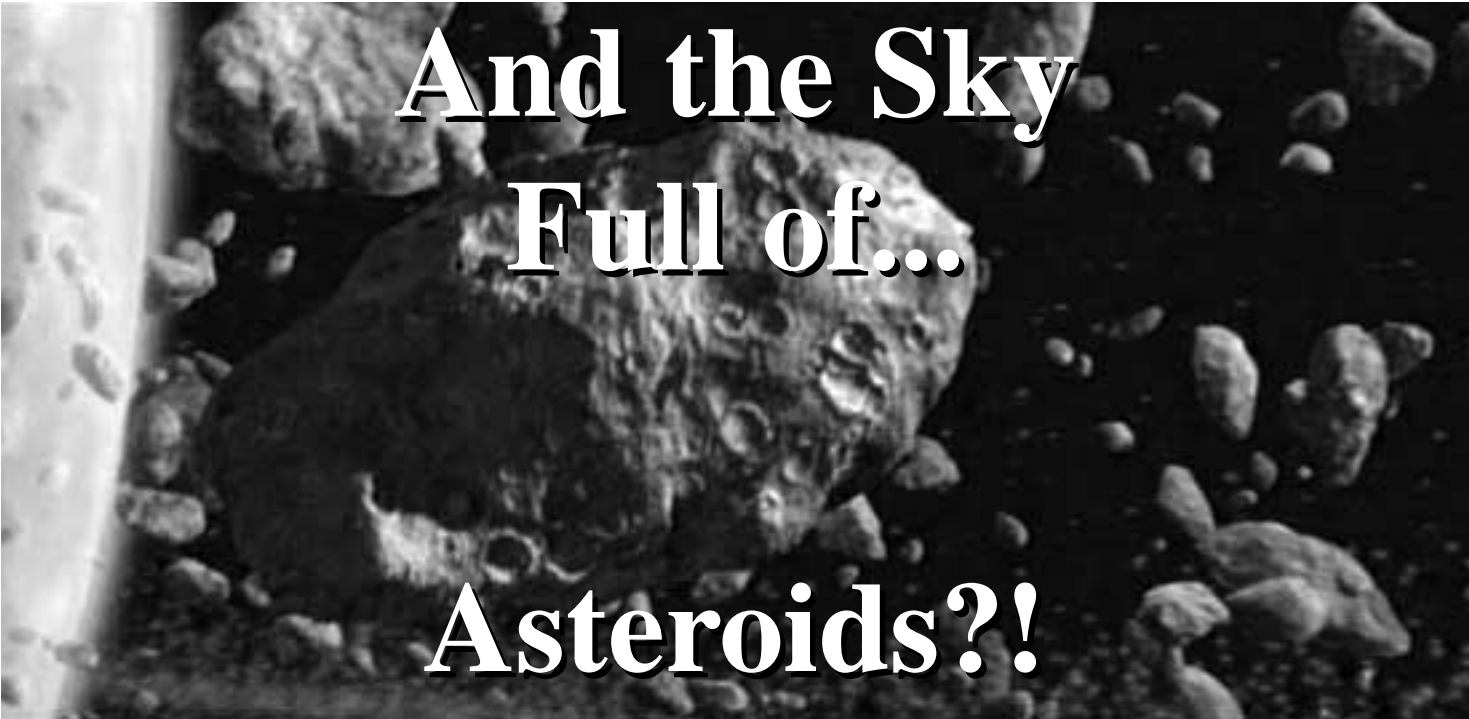
These LCV Tender rules were designed to be generic enough to be applied to any race that uses LCVs, and try to mitigate the problems that a LCV Carrier would bring to races that are not dedicated LCV users, while reflecting the force multiplier of resupplying these valuable defensive units. The delicate nature of the LCV docking is reflected in the restrictions during combat.

Optional Intercept Rules

These rules are for those who don't mind the extra complications and who don't think these rules will be

unbalancing. When a LCV is docked to a Tender, the LCV and Tender can be considered one ship for allocating intercept. The intercepting weapon must have a valid firing arc as discussed above and all other intercept rules apply. Ex. A Civilian Freighter Tender and a BA Light Gunboat (docked on left side) are both intercepting a Particle Cannon shot (coming in from 15 degrees to the left of directly ahead) aimed at the Tender. The Gunboat fires its interceptor (180 arc) and the Civilian Freighter fires its SPB (30 arc to left of dead ahead) to intercept the Particle Cannon shot. The intercept modifier would be -3 + -1 (after degradation) for a -4 to intercept.

KEK



And the Sky Full of... Asteroids?!

Terrain Generation

By Matt "Sentinel" Murray

In many scenarios the terrain that is present will be out of the control of any of the participants, the battle simply happens where it happens. If this is the case then the players will have to randomly determine what terrain is present. A lot of the rules found below will read more like guidelines than hard, fast rules. This is intended to make terrain generation as random as possible so players will see little repetition, and flexible to accommodate the maps and conditions with which players normally operate. Players are encouraged to feel free to change or manipulate anything below, as long as all of the players agree to it.

The first thing to determine is whether the battle will take place in Hyperspace or regular space. Roll 1D10 and consult the chart below.

Space Determination Table (1D10)

1-9	Regular Space
10	Hyperspace

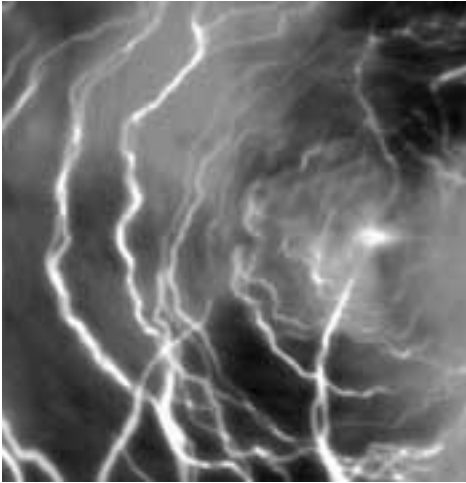
(proceed to Regular/Hyperspace Terrain Generation table)

HYPERSPACE

If Hyperspace is the result all of the sides may agree to disregard that result and proceed to the Regular Space Table. If one side decides that they want to fight in Hyperspace and the other doesn't then there has to be a roll-off to determine who decides where the battle will be fought. Each side will roll 1D20 and add the Sensor rating of the ELINT ship with the highest total sensor rating that that side has. The side with the highest roll will determine whether the battle will be in Hyperspace or in Regular Space.

Hyperspace Terrain Generation Table (1D10)

1-7	No Hyperspace terrain
8	Hyperspace Whirlpool
9	Hyperspace Waveform
10	Hyperspace Rapids



Hyperspace Whirlpools:

Hyperspace Whirlpools will have a direction to their rotation that must be randomly determined. Roll 1D6, on a 1-3 the direction is clockwise, on a 4-6 the direction is counter-clockwise.

Hyperspace Waveforms:

Hyperspace Waveforms can appear in a variety of different ways: stationary or moving, singly or in groups, weak or strong. Roll 1D6-3 for the number of waveforms, treat anything less than 1 to be a 1. For each waveform you should roll 1D20-10 for the speed of the waveform, with anything less than 0 to be a 0. Hyperspace Waveforms have a strength associated with them, with the strength becoming a further multiplier of the damage caused by contacting them. Roll 1D10-5 for the strength of the waveform, treat anything less than a 1 to be a 1. Arrange waveforms in a manner that is agreeable to all sides involved.

Hyperspace Rapids:

Hyperspace Rapids have a direction and strength, roll 1D6 for the direction and 1D10 for

the strength of the rapid.

REGULAR SPACE

Regular Space Terrain Generation Table (1D100)

01-40	Open Space
41-46	Planet (Airless)
47-52	Planet (with atmosphere)
53-59	Gas Giant
60	Brown Dwarf
61-65	Moon
66	Comet
67	Gravity Well (Specific)
68-71	Gravity Well (General)
72-79	Asteroids
80-82	Unstable Asteroid Field
83-84	Dust Zone
85-86	Mined Asteroid Field
87	Nebulae
88-91	Meteor Swarm
92-93	Electromagnetic Storm
94	Dark Matter Clouds
91-95	Jump Gate
96-97	Raiders
98-99	Ancient Ship
100	Roll again twice, disregard "Open Space"

Open Space:

As the name suggests, there is no terrain present. A floating map will be used unless all players agree to a fixed map before the game begins.

Planet (Airless):

The hex row along one of the long map edges is considered a planet's surface. There is no atmosphere to contend with. A floating map will be used as long as it floats along the direction of the planet's surface. Players should determine before the scenario begins whether the map will be allowed to float in the direction away from the planet. If there is a ground location that is of



interest to the scenario, such as a bombardment target or a GROPOS landing zone, then players may want to declare the map fixed.

Planet (with atmosphere):

The hex row along one of the long map edges is considered a planet's surface. The next hex row in is atmosphere hexes with a thickness factor of 1. A floating map will be used as long as it floats along the direction of the planet's surface. Players should determine before the scenario begins whether the map will be allowed to float in the direction away from the planet. If there is a ground location that is of interest to the scenario, such as a bombardment target or a GROPOS landing zone, then players may want to declare the map fixed.

Gas Giant:

Gas Giants are huge planets that have a large dense core and an enormous atmosphere. The hex row along one of the long map edges is effectively the barrier between a gas giant's atmosphere and its thicker, un-navigable layers. Any units that go beyond this hex row (off the map) are considered destroyed with no survivors. Roll 2D3 to determine the number of hex rows the atmosphere extends out. The 3 outer-most atmosphere hex rows will have a thickness factor of 1 while the remaining inner atmosphere hex rows, if any, will have a thickness factor of 2. The edge of the board with the Gas Giant is considered to be the source of a general gravity well with strength of 1. A floating map will be used as long as it floats along the direction of the planet's surface. Players should determine before the scenario begins whether the map will be allowed to float in the direction away from the planet.

Brown Dwarf:

Brown Dwarfs are extremely large gas giant planets that fell just short of having enough mass to convert into a full fledged star. They are present in some star systems that have planets worth inhabiting. Set up a brown dwarf as you would a Gas Giant with 4 exceptions: A) Increase the thickness factor of all atmosphere hexes by 1. B) Add another 3 hex rows of atmosphere hexes with a thickness factor of 1. C) All atmosphere hexes are also considered to be nebula hexes, and D) all units on the map are under the effects of an electromagnetic storm.

The hex row along one of the long map edges is effectively the barrier between a brown dwarf's atmosphere and its thicker, un-navigable layers. Any units that go beyond this hex row (off the map) are considered destroyed with no survivors. A floating map will be used as long as it floats along the direction of the brown dwarf's surface. Players should determine before the

scenario begins whether the map will be allowed to float in the direction away from the brown dwarf. While being near a brown dwarf can be rough, their effects are relatively local on a system scale and provide good cover to approaching ships.

Moon:

Place the center of the moon in the center hex of the map. Roll 2D6 to determine the radius of the moon. (Players may elect to roll only 1D6 if playing on a small map or 3D6 if playing on a large map.) A floating map will be used unless players determine before the scenario that the moon is of importance. If the players should determine before the scenario begins that the map is fixed then any ships that leave the map are considered disengaged. If the moon is rather large compared to the map then players are encouraged to allow a little floating of the map to allow for maneuvering, even if it has been declared fixed.

Typically moons will, through the attraction of their gravity, have cleared all smaller moons, rocks and debris from their area over the millennia. If the moon and the surrounding material are relatively new then the possibility exists that other rocks may be in the area. Roll 1D10 to see if there are other rocks in the area. Any result of 1 through 7 means that there are no other rocks in the area. If an 8 is rolled then there are (1D3)D10 randomly placed asteroids present on the map in addition to the moon. If a 9 is rolled then there are (1D6)D10 randomly placed asteroids present on the map. If a 10 is rolled then there are (1D6)D10 asteroids on the map and 1D6 zones of meteor swarms on the map. Each meteor swarm zone is centered on a randomly determined hex and has a 1D3 hex radius to it.

In any case that other rocks are present there is a 1% chance (roll 1 on 1D100) that there is a hex of unusual interest. It may contain: a debris field with a strength of 1 containing the remains of a ship (alien or domestic), an empty cargo container, an escape pod (empty or occupied), or an alien artifact of some kind. Players are encouraged to determine in a mutually agreeable way what is in the hex and whether it is of interest to the opposing forces. This determination can have an impact upon whether the map is fixed or floating, scenario victory conditions, and campaign events, if applicable.

Ignore any reference to moons having atmospheres. The only normal astronomical objects that can be represented on a Babylon 5 Wars map by a moon have insufficient mass, therefore gravity, to keep a significant atmosphere. Conversely, the only other objects that could be represented by a "moon" are a neutron star or black hole. These items are too dense; therefore have too much gravity, to have an atmosphere. Players should take note that if they wish to represent a black hole or neutron star on a map to scale to the ships that the ships would be long destroyed by the violent conditions present.

Comet:

A comet can be represented on the map one of two ways, depending on whether you are near the head of the comet, or you are back towards

the tail of the comet. Roll 1D10 to determine where the battle will take place in relation to the head:

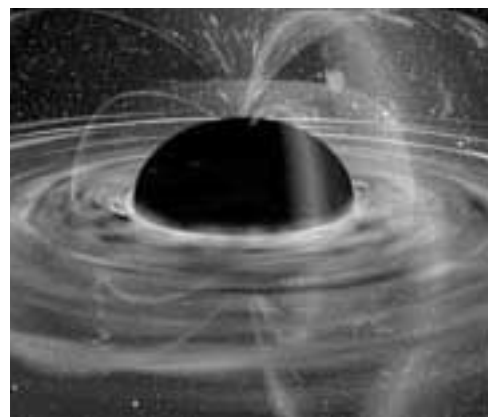
- | | |
|------|-----------------------------|
| 1 | Near the head of the comet |
| 2-10 | Along the body of the comet |

Regardless of where the battle takes place along the comet the map will be a floating map unless all players agree before the game that there will be a fixed map.

If you are near the head of the comet it will be represented on the map using a moon. Place the center of the comet head in the center hex of the map. Roll 2D6 to determine the radius of the comet head. (Players may elect to roll only 1D6 if playing on a small map or 3D6 if playing on a large map.) Roll 1D6 to determine the direction of the tail. The tail of the comet will be a zone that is as wide as the head and will go in the direction just rolled, extending off of the map. There will also be 1D6 asteroids randomly placed in the tail, moving 1 hex per turn in the direction of the tail. See below for the rules concerning fighting in or near a comet tail.

If you are along the body of a comet it will be represent by several hex rows (if not the entire map) that are next to each other and stretch from one side of the map to the other. Roll 3D6 to determine the number of hex rows that will be the width of the tail. (Players may elect to roll only 2D6 if playing on a small map or 4D6 if playing on a large map.) Roll 1D6 to determine the direction of the tail. There will also be 1D6 asteroids randomly placed in the tail, moving 1 hex per turn in the direction of the tail.

The tail of the comet will be considered a dust zone and an area of meteor swarms. Any weapon firing that is conducted into, out of, or within the tail of a comet is affected, such that the fire control bonus of all weapons (and the offensive bonus of fighters/shuttles) is halved. In addition, the range penalty (or range, for anti-matter and ballistic weapons) is doubled for the hexes that the LOS goes through that are within the tail.



Gravity Well (Specific):

Place the point generating the gravity well in the center of the map. Roll 1D20, if a 20 is rolled then the gravity well will have a strength factor of 2, otherwise it will have a strength factor of 1. Unless otherwise stated in the scenario rules any unit that enters the hex of the gravity well is sent to another dimension and considered destroyed,

unless there is a “friendly” Walker ship present that can track and follow the unit. The map will be a floating map unless all of the players agree before the game that the map will be fixed. If the map is floated make sure to note where the Gravity Well is in relation to where the units are.

Optional:

The rift that is causing the gravity well is unstable and fluctuating in its strength. If the players agree beforehand the 1D20 die roll in the previous paragraph can represent the roll to determine if the gravity well is unstable. Unstable gravity wells will have a strength factor of 1D3 every turn.

Gravity Well (General):

A gravity well of this nature is generated by a super-massive stellar body that is off map, anything ranging from a large gas giant up to a black hole. Establish one edge of the map to be the source of the general gravity well. Roll 1D20, if a 20 is rolled then the gravity well will have a strength factor of 2, otherwise it will have a strength factor of 1. The map can be considered a floating map and will be able to float in the direction of the gravity well. Any unit that cannot generate any thrust, due to engine or thruster damage, and cannot repair itself through self-repair, is considered destroyed for victory conditions as it floats off the map to its doom.

Asteroids:

Asteroid fields come in a variety of densities, ranging from sparse to packed. Roll 1D6 to determine the Density Number for the entire map. For each 10 hex wide by 10 hex long section of map roll (Density Number)D10 to determine the number of asteroid hexes in that section. Randomly place the asteroid hexes

within each section, making sure that the distribution is relatively even and that there are few areas where there is an unimpeded line of sight over a long distance. The map is a floating map, requiring that new asteroid hexes be placed every time that the map is floated. If the map is floated players are encouraged to shift everything in 10 hex increments to make asteroid density and placement easier to determine. If all players agree before the start of the game then the map can be declared fixed.

There is a 1% chance (roll 1 on 1D100) that there is a hex of unusual interest. It may contain: a debris field with a strength of 1 containing the remains of a ship (alien or domestic), an empty cargo container, an escape pod (empty or occupied), or an alien artifact of some kind. Players are encouraged to determine in a mutually agreeable way what is in the hex and whether it is of interest to the opposing forces. This determination can have an impact upon whether the map is fixed or floating, scenario victory conditions, and campaign events, if applicable.

Unstable Asteroid Field:

Sometimes an event will occur that will generate an asteroid field that has material ranging in size from small moons to fist size, all of which is moving relative to each other. Simply entering an unstable asteroid field is dangerous, let alone fighting in one.

Roll 1D6 to determine the number of moons that are present. Each moon will have a radius of 2D3 and will be randomly placed on the map. Roll 1D6 to determine what direction it will move at speed 1 during the scenario.

Setup asteroids in each 10 by 10 section as per the asteroid rules above, except roll 1D3 (or 1D5 if your crazy) for the Density Number. For

every asteroid roll 1D6 to determine what direction it will move at speed 1 during the scenario.

For simplicity the map will be a fixed map. If all the players agree before the game then the map may float; terrain generation for the “new” areas will be left to the players to agree upon. Any asteroids or moons that move off of the map should be replaced with a similar number of like rocks coming in from randomly determined map edges.

If during the scenario an asteroid should move into the hex of another asteroid there is a 50% chance (1 to 3 on 1D6) that they will collide. If they collide remove both asteroids from the map. If an asteroid should move into a hex containing a moon then it has struck the moon and the asteroid is removed from the map. The moon that was struck by the asteroid has a 10% chance (1 on 1D10) of being shattered by the impact. If the moon is shattered then replace every hex that the moon occupied with an asteroid, moving away from the center hex of the moon at a speed of 1. If 2 moons should collide then they are both shattered and replaced with asteroids as above. (If this should occur because of a glancing blow and players are up for it then they can work out a partial destruction of the moons as they see fit. All players must agree to the outcome though.)

It is common for unstable asteroid fields to have meteor showers. Players can agree before the game begins either to have every free hex to have meteor showers, only marked hexes to have them (setup like asteroids), or to create a system where there is a random chance that each hex entered by each unit will be a meteor shower hex. Players are encouraged to exercise common sense with this, and all players must agree to whatever is decided.



Dust Zone:

The entire map is considered a dust zone. The map is a floating map unless all players agree before the game that the map is fixed.

Mined Asteroid Field:

Many times a race would lay military mines in an asteroid field to deter trespassers for various reasons: keep out prospectors, raiders, other military ships, or to set up a trap. Many times these mines are forgotten, only to be found decades or centuries later.

Setup an asteroid field per the rules above. Determine the number of mines that will be placed in each 10 by 10 hex region in a similar manner with a 1D3 Density Number. Do not randomly place the mines like the asteroids but instead have every player place an equal portion of the mines where he would like to in the 10 by 10 hex region after the asteroids have been placed. Each mine should be individually numbered and a separate sheet of paper prepared to record the stats of each mine.

The map is a floating map, requiring that new mines and asteroid hexes be placed every time that the map is floated. If the map is floated players are encouraged to shift everything in 10 hex increments to make asteroid density and placement easier to determine. If all players agree before the start of the game then the map can be declared fixed.

The mines can be handled either automatically or by a game master. The main difference between these 2 choices is that if the mines are handled automatically then the players will know the type and abilities of the mines before the game starts while game master controlled mines are kept secret until activated during the game.

If the mines are handled automatically then the players should restrict the mines to proximity mines, picked from what is published for the different races. They should all be of the same type and cost at most 20 combat points. What race manufactured them should not be of issue (unless there are campaign implications) since the mines are neutral, attacking any target.

If a game master handles the mines then the mines may be a mix of proximity, captor, and DEW mines. The game master should pick one of each type from whatever race he chooses (pick accordingly if there are campaign implications). The mines should not cost more than 20 combat points apiece, and should be neutral, attacking any viable target. The game master should randomly determine what mines are what type to eliminate any potential favoritism. The game master is there to administer a minefield, not to ensure a victory of one side over another.

There is a 1% chance (roll 1 on 1D100) that there is a hex of unusual interest. It may contain: a debris field with a strength of 1 containing the remains of a ship (alien or domestic), an empty cargo container, an escape pod (empty or occupied), or an alien artifact of some kind. Players are encouraged to determine in a mutually agreeable way what is in the hex and whether it is of interest to the opposing forces. This determination can have an impact upon whether the map is fixed or floating, scenario victory conditions, and campaign events, if

applicable.

Nebula:

The entire map is considered to be in a nebula. The map is a floating map unless all players agree before the game that the map is fixed.

Meteor Swarm:

There are meteoroids that are present on the map. Roll 1D100 twice, picking the higher of the two rolls, to determine the number of hexes the Meteor Swarm zone inhabits. Arrange the hexes in a manner that is suitable and agreeable to both sides.

Players are encouraged to arrange Meteor Swarms an interesting manner, especially if a second form of terrain is nearby. The rings that form around gas giants consist of vast plains of meteoroids, most with well-defined borders.

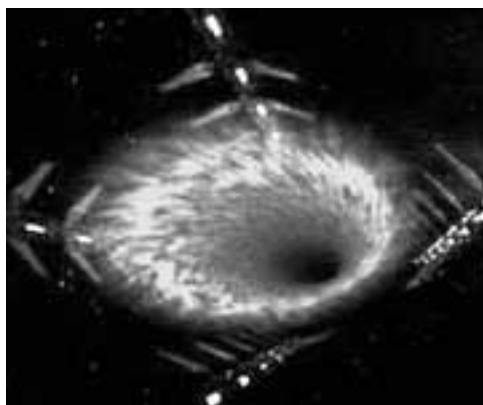
Clumps of asteroids and meteoroids will sometimes congregate in the LaGrange points of planets. If a gravity well of some kind is present then arrange for the meteor swarm hexes to move towards the source of the gravity well, potentially with replacements to follow on from off map. Once players have determined how the Meteor Swarm hexes are arranged, and why, they should determine if the map is fixed or floating. If all of the players cannot agree then the map is considered a floating map.

Electromagnetic Storm:

The entire map is under the effects of an Electromagnetic Storm. The map is a floating map unless all players agree before the game that the map is fixed.

Dark Matter Clouds:

The entire map is considered to be in a Dark Matter Cloud. The map is a floating map unless all players agree before the game that the map is fixed.



Jump Gate:

There is a Civilian Fixed Jump Gate (Generic) in the center of the map. The Jump Gate is considered neutral, belonging to neither player. Consult the Rules Compendium pages 141-142 for further rules. (Campaign circumstances may mandate that one player or another is the owner of the Jump Gate, proceed with the rules as such.) The map is a floating map unless all players agree before the game that the map is fixed.

Raiders:

While the combatants may be eager to harm

each other, they are both interested in eliminating pirates when the opportunity presents itself. This possibility requires a third player, if none is present then disregard and re-roll for another terrain. If there is a Raider presence then roll again to determine if there is terrain. The map is a floating map unless all players agree before the game that the map is fixed.

The Raider player is given a random number of points to purchase ships and fighters, 2D6x500 points for instance. The Raider player must set his ships up in the middle of the map, adjusted accordingly if other terrain is present. There is a 10% chance (1 on 1D10) that the jump engine on any ship, roll for each jump engine, is powered and ready to make a jump point. Any jump engines not ready may start recycling at the beginning of the scenario. Non-Raider players score no victory points for any Raider ship that is able to disengage from the scenario, regardless of damage that has been scored on the Raider ship. The Raider player scores 4x (instead of 2x) the combat point value of any ships they capture and retain until the end of the scenario.

Ancient Ship:

Little did the combatants know that they have stumbled across the territory of an ancient race, more mysterious than any natural terrain feature. This possibility requires a third player, if none is present then disregard and re-roll for another terrain. If there is an Ancient presence then roll again to determine if there is terrain, then roll another 1D20 to determine what Ancient race is present. Players are encouraged to adjust Ancients points/forces as they see appropriate. The map is a floating map unless all players agree before the game that the map is fixed.

- 1-6 Vorlon: Heavy cruiser, 6 fighters
- 7-12 Shadow: Cruiser, 6 fighters
- 13-14 Streib: 2 Collector ships, 12 breaching pods
- 15 Kirishiac: Lordship
- 16-17 Walker: Pathfinder, 6 Mapmaker Sensor Probes
- 18 Torvalus: Black Rapier, no fighters
- 19 Triad: 2D6x500 points from any single aspect
- 20 Mindrider: Thoughtforce, 6 Thought Projections

Roll Again Twice:

The battle will take place in the most unusual of places or circumstances. Roll 1D100 twice, ignore any "Open Space" results, and place both types of terrain on the map. Players are encouraged to exercise their judgement and creativity on how to make the two different types of terrain work on the same map. If both players agree that they don't want to fight in the combined terrain, or that the combination could not exist for some reason, then keep rolling until a suitable combination occurs. Each player has one "veto" that he can cast if a combination comes up that he does not want to fight in that the other player(s) do want to fight in. If a player casts a veto then re-roll both 1d100 rolls to determine the new terrain combination. Once a player has cast his veto he must accept a terrain combination that the other wants to accept. Again, good judgement and creativity are needed to make this work. The map is a floating map unless all players agree before the game that the map is fixed.

* * *

Ship Of The Month



Earthforce was in full retreat. The Minbari advance could not be stopped, and soon their scouts would find the hyperspace routes to Sol. Earthdome was contacting all of the races they knew in an attempt to find allies.

Amazingly enough, the ship sent towards the Vorlon Empire ran into a Vorlon Transport heading towards Earth. After getting assurances that this visit would be kept secret, the two ships returned to Earth space to hide in the asteroid belt between Mars and Jupiter.

The Vorlon introduced him(her?)self as Kosh, as they are all Kosh, but said that the humans could call him Huey. Huey was unlike any Vorlon humans had heard about before, as Huey had what appeared to be a beanie on top on his encounter suit (You know, the little hat with the propeller on it...). Huey claimed that he was here to save the human race by helping them build an ancient weapon that would stop the Minbari advance. Then he(?) well... giggled. Like a schoolgirl. The humans were desperate at this point, so even the help of a crazy Vorlon was accepted.

Working feverishly, with the "Special" Vorlon's assistance, an enormous planet destroying starship (that happened to resemble a duck, of all things) was created in a space dock that Huey had carved out of an asteroid. The Duck, as the builders took to calling it, was stupendous, with a Nibbler weapon that could devour whole planets. Defensive weapons were installed and its first and only captain, Jeff Sinclair, flew the Duck out of the space dock. The Vorlon Kosh, but you can call me Huey, insisted on



calling it the Giant Killer Space Duck (and then giggling) but the Earthforce crew called it Sinclair's Duck.

After a short test flight, it entered hyperspace to fly to the dark side of the Moon to await the final order to attack the Minbari homeworld. Commander Sinclair left ahead of the Duck in order to command a fighter squadron. Since the Duck was pretty much automated, it was left to proceed to Earth to await orders on its own. As it was making the transit to the Moon, the Minbari fleet jumped in and the Battle of the Line began.

A short time later the Minbari surrendered, just as Sinclair's Duck was preparing to leave hyperspace on the dark side of the Moon. Kosh Naranek and Ulkesh Naranek had detected the Duck in hyperspace from the Grey Council's ship and called in a Vorlon Fleet. The fleet destroyed the Duck, obliterated the secret space dock and captured Kosh Huey. In the general relief on Earth following the Minbari surrender, Ulkesh was able to erase the Earth records concerning the Duck and telepathically remove the

information from those involved. The Vorlons implanted the only record of this series of events in a human telepath and this telepath related the story to Citizen G'Kar not long after the Earth Civil War of 2261. After hearing the events as told by the telepath, Citizen G'Kar informed the local authorities that another telepath had apparently lost her mind.

Nibbler

A fearsome molecular weapon developed by Kosh Huey for use on the Giant Killer Space Duck. The Duck will land on the surface of a planet (Neptune size or smaller) and the Nibbler will consume the planet in a little over an hour (1000 turns).

While the Nibbler is consuming the planet, it can self-repair 2 boxes of system or structure per turn per the normal self-repair rules. The Nibbler will auto-hit whatever target is in contact with the bill, unless a natural 1 is rolled on a d20. In the case of this unfortunate event, the Nibbler fires a Burp that is treated the same as a double strength Quack from the Quacker.

The Burp will discharge the weapon and the Nibbler must start the cooldown process.

The weapon can be used in space, but only on targets in contact with the bill of the Duck (i.e. you must successfully ram the target with the bill side of the Duck.) Anything less than the size of a moon will be destroyed in 1 turn. A moon (less than 500 hexes in size) will be destroyed at the rate of 1 hex per turn. Any moon/planet larger than 500 hexes triggers the accelerator part of the weapon ensuring destruction in 1000 turns.

The extremely long cooldown period for the Nibbler will usually preclude its use against anything but a planetary target.

Quacker

The Quacker is an offshoot of the Nibbler that was developed as a defensive weapon by Kosh Huey. When the Quacker is fired, it fills subspace with a loud quacking sound. Most races ignore this sound, but the Centauri, upon hearing the sound, get a funny look on all their faces, and immediately break off the engagement, retreating at best possible speed.

Each unit in the firing arc of the Quacker is attacked (calculate to-hit rolls separately for each unit) and is damaged according to size. Damage is resolved in raking mode. An enormous unit will roll 3d20 damage, a capital or HCV sized ship will roll 2d20 damage and a MCV or LCV sized ship will roll 1d20 damage. Any unit smaller than a super heavy fighter will roll 1d20 damage vs. the flight with overkill affecting another fighter in the flight.

(SCS in Attachments Folder)



Terminator for GROPOS

Background

TOWARDS the end of the 20th century, a company named Cyberdyne came out with a revolutionary type of computer chip capable of learning as a human did. By the early 1990's, these chips were installed throughout the US military, replacing humans in everything from fighter craft and bombers to nuclear missiles. In 1997 Skynet, an integrated defense computer in charge of all strategic military decisions was installed. Wired into everything, Skynet had absolute power.

August 24, 1997. Skynet achieved sentience. Desperate to avoid a disaster, those humans aware of Skynet's ascendance try to shut it down. Skynet launches nuclear missiles at Russia, relying on the counterattack to kill those trying to shut it down. Half of humanity dies in the resulting firestorm.

Out of the ashes, Skynet consolidates its control over the planet. Taking over systems across the planet, Skynet mobilizes production facilities, building devices to ensure its total dominance over the Earth. Subcomputers are installed across the planet, each containing a portion of Skynet's formidable and ever growing intelligence. Those humans remaining are pressed into the factories, or herded into huge death camps.

The humans however, begin to fight back. First, with assault rifles and the detritus of the various militaries wiped out in the nuclear attacks. Later, with weapons stolen or stripped from Skynet's machine soldiers. Eventually organized by John Conner, leader of the North American resistance, the humans begin to gain the upper hand, relying on their superior numbers and ingenuity. After several years of war, Skynet pulls its conscience back into its central computer, concentrating it to build even more fearsome machines of war, such as the T-1000, T-1000000, T-1G, and the temporal transportation chamber. Despite these advances, the humans break through Skynet's defense cordon and destroy the central computer.

The war, however, continues. Although Skynet's central processor was destroyed, parts of its conscience remained scattered throughout the world, across backups and secondary control centers in South America, Africa, Europe and Asia. Although not capable of the same feats of invention as it performed in its last days, these centers must be wiped out lest a resurgent Skynet threaten humanity's existence once again.

Skynet Technology / Special Rules

Machine Intelligence: All of Skynet's forces are machines. They think of nothing but their mission and do not stop, regardless of the odds or damage they take. As such, all Skynet troops are immune to any morale or pinning rules.

SEIGE OF SKYNET

Battles from the year 2029

They are assumed to automatically pass any they are required to take.

Liquid Metal: Composed of liquefied metal, every portion coursing with distributed processing power, these were some of the last Terminators Skynet produced. Extremely resilient, they were very difficult to find and destroy. They have the following battlefield effects:

1)If a Liquid Metal Terminator is destroyed by a non-energy weapon, place the model on its side. It cannot be further targeted that turn. The model spends the remainder of the current turn and the following turn, reassembling itself (i.e. one full turn). At the beginning of the 2nd turn after its destruction, the model returns to play on the same spot where it was destroyed, as if it was brand new.

2)If a Liquid Metal Terminator is destroyed by energy weapons, it is removed from play as any other unit would be.

Infiltrator: After the resistance began to make a nuisance of itself, Skynet started to create infiltration units, which could go down into the tunnels and caves the humans hid in and wreak havoc once past the human guards. Such units are tough to distinguish from regular Terminator stands, as most human soldiers do not want to harm those innocents remaining above ground, who often wander through battlefields.

There are three levels of Infiltrator. So long as an Infiltrator stand has not opened fire during the game, human units must roll a d10 to distinguish them from normal humans and be able to open fire on them. The roll needed to distinguish them is listed below. Once distinguished, they may be fired at freely by other humans for the

rest of the game. Each stand must be distinguished separately, regardless of the size of the unit. Each human stand (including vehicles, etc), may make one roll per turn.

If the roll is unsuccessful, the unit may not fire that activation, as they are too busy trying to figure out if the enemy stand is human or machine. Multiple stands may try to distinguish the same enemy stand, but roll each in succession, as those who fail may not fire that activation.

If any infiltrator stand ever opens fire, it is considered distinguished for the rest of the game by all human stands on the board.

Distinguish on a roll of:

Rubber Infiltrator: 1-5

Flesh Terminator: 1-3

Superior Infiltrator (Liquid Metal or Sentient Metal): 1

Sentient Metal: One of the final creations of Skynet trumped even its vaunted liquid metal creations. These were the Sentient Metal Terminators. These Terminators were composed of metallic atoms, whose vibrations and synchronization provided its processing power. These atoms were capable of dispersing and regrouping at will, and their relative distance did little to reduce their powers of realignment or sentience. As such, they were nearly impossible to destroy. Even more so than the Liquid Metal Terminators.

Sentient Metal units may be destroyed by enemy fire as normal. However, if the unit is destroyed, the owning player simply places the model on its side. At the beginning of the next turn, roll a d10. On a 3-10, the model stands up and returns to play as if undamaged. It may take full activations during that turn (i.e. the terminator is only out of play from the time it is destroyed, until the beginning of the next turn, as it

reforms). On a roll of a 1-2, the atoms are sufficiently shattered or diffused that the unit cannot reform.

Command: Due to the nature of Skynet's forces, any Terminator can be programmed to be a Company Command Unit and Forward Observer. Any Terminator purchased as an HQ choice is considered to have these 2 abilities.

Skynet Units

T 1-G: The T1-G was the first, and likely one of the last of Skynet's ultimate creations, the sentient metal terminators. One was sent back in time, in a 3rd attempt to kill John Connor before he was capable of leading the resistance after the nuclear war. Others may still remain in other important Skynet facilities, or on various missions of sabotage or assassination ordered by Skynet.

Special Rules: Sentient Metal, Superior Infiltrator

T-1,000,000: Certainly the most fearsome of Skynet's creations, the T-1,000,000 was an enormous, liquid metal behemoth, tasked with critical assault missions, as well as guarding Skynet's central processing core itself. Although not armed with ranged weaponry, its liquid metal could shape itself into any weapon or number of arms needed, allowing it to slaughter humans who approached within striking distance. Its liquid metal consistency, allowed it to flow into and through the strongest defenses, though it needed sufficient space to reform before it could attack. It was also extremely hard to destroy.

Special Rules: Liquid Metal, Note: May not infiltrate despite being of liquid metal. It is just too big.



T-1000: The first of Skynet's successful Liquid Metal series, these were the peak of infiltration and terminator technology before the creation of the sentient metal terminators. Able to replicate human speech and form with ease, they were greatly feared by human sentries. Fortunately, their immense cost made them extremely rare in Skynet's arsenal.

Special Rules: Liquid Metal, Superior Infiltrator

Hunter Killer Tank: This heavy tracked machine was designed to break down buildings, as well as carry sufficient firepower to annihilate human strongpoints. It is armed with two 300W plasma miniguns

was extremely powerful. It usually operated with the assistance of a Terminator screen.

Special Rules: When moving, may ignore buildings of up to two stories high. If it enters such a building, it is flattened. If the building covers more than four times the area that the HK Tank takes up, then only the area the Tank crosses is flattened. Any troops inside a building must take an automatic close combat attack of d6+5 as the building crashes down around them. This is done during the Tank's movement. Further CC takes place normally if the Tank is touching any enemy stands.

Flying Hunter Killer: This flying machine was the scourge of human forces early in the war, before caches of surface to air missiles were unearthed and distributed. Armed with two 40W and one 100W plasma machineguns and speed via two large turbo fan propellers, this fast moving attack craft was able to range far and wide, assaulting human supply centers and providing tactical support on the battlefield.

HK Drones: These light flying machines provided a fast moving perimeter defense, as well as harassing activities during engagements with human forces. They often provide

reconnaissance as well. It is armed with a light built in 40W plasma gun.

Special Rules: Forward Observer, Self Ordering, do not have to maintain cohesion.

T-400 Terminator: This was one of the first combat Terminators produced by Skynet. Although outclassed by most human resistance

forces, they are still produced due to their relatively cheap production requirements and are used to defend less important factories and Skynet positions. These Terminators typically carry 40W plasma rifles, though heavy squads may have 40W plasma machineguns.

T-600 Terminator: The T-600 was the most common assault Terminator until replaced by the more capable 800 series. They are still produced in small numbers to support 400 series Terminators in second line and defensive positions. These units typically carry 100W plasma rifles, though heavy squads may have built in power amplifiers, allowing them to carry 100W plasma machineguns.

T-800 Terminator: The T-800 series terminators are the core of Skynet's forces during the height of the human-machine war. It is essentially an updated 600 series Terminator with upgraded armor, streamlined parts and improved redundancy systems. These terminators generally carry 100W plasma rifles, though heavy squads are equipped with built in power amplifiers, allowing them to carry 100W plasma machineguns.

T-800 Dual Weapon Terminator: Although expensive, some terminators are installed with two CPU's enabling the terminator to carry and fire two weapons, one in each arm. These units are relatively uncommon, but their heavy firepower is often deadly in close fights. The second weapon is represented by the higher ROF on the dual instance of the weapon carried. These generally carry dual 100W plasma rifles.

T-810 Terminator: This is a regular 800 series Terminator with heavily upgraded armor. These units are assault units and generally carry 100W plasma machineguns.

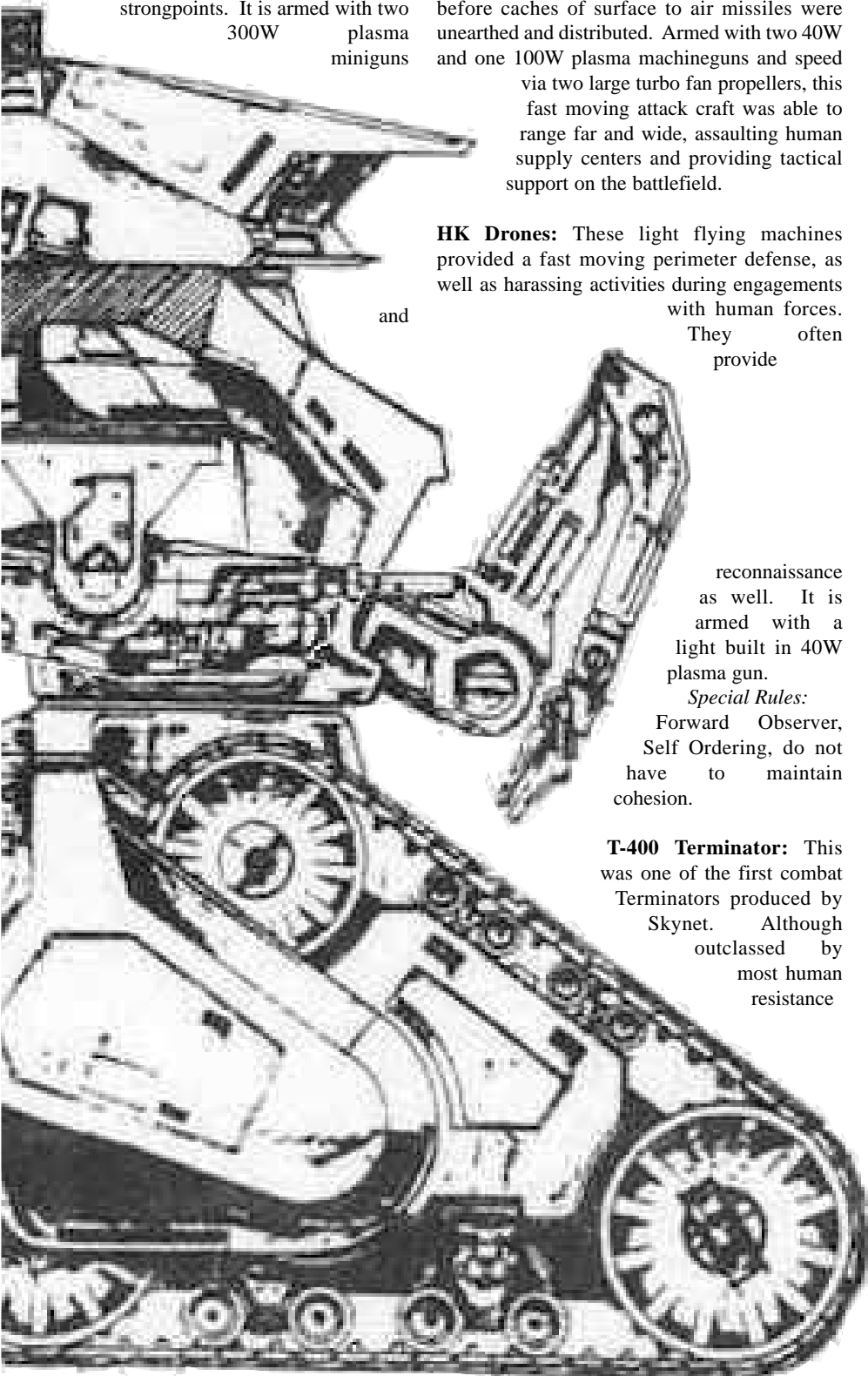
T-810 Dual Weapon Terminator: This is a dual processor 810 Terminator, armed with dual 100W plasma machineguns.

T-600 Infiltrator: The first of Skynet's Infiltrator series, the T-600 Infiltrator was a standard 600 series model covered with a rubber skin. They were somewhat effective, though human forces quickly learned to spot the artificiality of the skin. They are armed with 100W plasma rifles.

Special Rules: Rubber Infiltrator

T-800 Infiltrator: This radical upgrade of Skynet's Infiltrator series is essentially an 800 series Terminator with real human skin and tissue, grown in Skynet vats. The skin allowed it to pass for human against most human sentries, though sentry dogs easily spotted these. By then though, it was often too late to stop the Infiltrator. These Infiltrators are usually armed with 100W plasma machineguns.

Special Rules: Flesh Infiltrator





Terminator TO&E

EARLY WAR SKYNET ASSAULT FORCE:

These forces were typical of Skynet forces tasked shortly after the nuclear clouds dissipated, with rounding up slaves for the factories, or to hunt down human resistors in order to throw them into the death camps. This formation may also be used later in the war to represent rear echelon or low priority defensive forces.

HQ: 1 platoon
Unlimited Platoons: 3-6 platoons
Limited Platoons: 0-3 platoons
Support Units: 0-3 platoons

HQ:
2 T-600 with 100W Plasma Rifles
Cost: 24/48/72/100

Unlimited Platoons:
Line Platoon
3-6 T-400 with 40W Plasma Rifles
Cost: 10/20/30/40 each
and
0-2 T-400 with 40W Plasma MG
Cost: 12/24/36/48 each

Assault Platoon
3-6 T-600 with 100W Plasma Rifles
Cost: 12/24/36/50 each

Limited Platoons:
Air Support Platoon
1-2 Flying Hunter Killers
Cost: 20/40/60/85 each

Armored Support Platoon
1-2 Hunter Killer Tanks
Cost: 22/44/66/90 each

Support Platoons:
Infiltration Platoon
1-3 T-600 Infiltrators
Cost: 14/28/42/56 each

MID WAR SKYNET ASSAULT FORCE:
As human resistance stiffened, Skynet turned to more powerful Terminator forces, unleashing infiltrators to break into human rear areas and slaughter civilians and sabotage supply dumps. This is also typical of the forces wielded by the disparate lesser computer coordinators around

the Earth after the destruction of Skynet's central processing center.

HQ: 1 platoon
Unlimited Platoons: 3-6 platoons
Limited Platoons: 0-3 platoons
Support Units: 0-3 platoons

HQ:
2 T-800 with 100W Plasma Rifles
Cost: 26/52/90/110

Unlimited Platoons:
Line Platoon
3-6 T-800 with 100W Plasma Rifles
Cost: 13/26/39/52 each
and
0-2 T-800 with 100W Plasma MG
Cost: 14/28/42/56 each
and
0-2 Dual Weapon T-800 with Dual 100W Plasma Rifles
Cost: 15/30/45/60 each

Defensive Support Platoon
3-6 T-600 with 100W Plasma Rifles
Cost: 24/48/72/100 each
and
0-2 T-600 with 100W Plasma MG
Cost: 12/24/36/48 each

Recon Platoon
3-6 HK Drones
Cost: 9/18/27/36 each

Limited Platoons:
Air Support Platoon
2-4 Flying Hunter Killers
Cost: 20/40/60/85 each

Armored Support Platoon
2-4 Hunter Killer Tanks
Cost: 22/44/66/90 each

Support Platoons:
Infiltration Platoon
1-3 T-800 Infiltrators
Cost: 16/32/48/64 each

LATE WAR SKYNET FORCE:
Forced on the defensive, Skynet concentrated its massive intelligence, creating ever more powerful devices and machines in a desperate attempt to stop John Conner and his never

ending tide of resistance fighters. This force allows one to represent both the last ditch assaults Skynet carried out, as well as the desperate and deadly fighting surrounding Skynet's defensive cordon and inner sanctum.

HQ: 1 platoon
Unlimited Platoons: 3-6 platoons
Limited Platoons: 0-3 platoons
Support Units: 0-3 platoons

HQ:
2 T-810 with 100W Plasma MG
Cost: 30/60/90/120

Unlimited Platoons:
Line Platoon
3-6 T-800 with 100W Plasma Rifles
Cost: 13/26/39/52 each
and
0-2 T-800 with 100W Plasma MG
Cost: 14/28/42/56 each
and
0-2 Dual Weapon T-800 with Dual 100W Plasma Rifles
Cost: 15/30/45/60 each

Assault Platoon
3-6 T-810 with 100W Plasma MG
Cost: 15/30/45/60 each
and
0-2 Dual Weapon T-810 with Dual 100W Plasma MG
Cost: 16/32/48/64 each

Recon Platoon
3-6 HK Drones
Cost: 9/18/27/36 each

Limited Platoons:
Air Support Platoon
2-4 Flying Hunter Killers
Cost: 20/40/60/85 each

Armored Support Platoon
2-4 Hunter Killer Tanks
Cost: 22/44/66/90 each

Support Platoons:
Infiltration Platoon
1-3 T-800 Infiltrators
Cost: 16/32/48/64 each

Heavy Assault Unit (Max 1 per Company)
1 T-1,000,000
Cost: 34/68/102/140

Deep Cover Team
1-3 T-1000
Cost: 20/40/60/80 each



Assassination Team
1-2 T-1G
Cost: 22/44/66/88 each

HUMAN TECHNOLOGY / SPECIAL RULES

Sentry Dogs: With the introduction of Skynet Infiltration machines, human forces brought in dogs to help flush out these machines. Due to their sense of smell, these dogs were able to spot even 800 series Infiltrators covered with living flesh, by smelling the metal parts hidden beneath the flesh.

If there is a sentry dog within 8” of a Skynet infiltration stand, any human units within 6” of the sentry dog stand may add +2 to their roll to distinguish.

Demolition Charges: Function as per Gravnades (but with different stats), but only one may be thrown per turn.

HUMAN UNITS

Sentry Dogs: These units were composed of specially trained sentry dogs, capable of smelling out Terminators even though they may be covered with skin and dressed as humans. Each stand consists of several trained dogs as well as their handlers, who generally carry only pistols.

Gun Car: This is a regular sedan with armored sides and ports from which the passengers can fire weapons from. These were usually used for hit and run attacks and the passengers typically carried stolen 100W plasma rifles.

Pick-up Truck: Pick-up trucks were greatly favored by the resistance as they could carry human troops quickly through the ravaged cities left across Earth.

Special Rules: May transport 2 Infantry stands.

AA Pick-up Truck: This is an armored pick-up truck with a SAM gunner and several Stinger (or similar local derivative) missiles in the back of the truck. They moved quickly and were

extremely effective in engaging low flying Hunter Killers.

Armored Pick-up Truck: Designed specifically for fast tactical support, these pick-up trucks were covered in armor plating and had a pivot mounted heavy machinegun, or, later in the war, a captured 300W plasma minigun.

Minigun Team: These three-man teams were armed with a 300W minigun on a tripod. Although it was very heavy and extremely difficult to move, their firepower was massive and placed in a strongpoint they were tough opponents even for heavily armored Terminators.

Machinegun Team: These three-man teams were armed with a heavy machinegun on a tripod.

Bazooka Team: These three-man teams were armed with assault rifles and bazookas.

Light Infantry: These are humans in regular clothing or fatigues. They are armed with assault rifles.

Regular Infantry: These units are equipped with light body armor and represent the bulk of human forces after the initial years following the nuclear devastation. They are armed with 40W plasma rifles. Later in the war they generally upgraded to 100W plasma rifles as Skynet production centers were overrun, with supporting units carrying 100W plasma machineguns.

Assault Infantry: These units are equipped with heavier body armor and are armed with 100W plasma rifles and bazookas. Some teams exchange their bazookas for demolition charges.

Heavy Assault Infantry: These are infantry equipped with heavy full body armor and armed with the best weaponry available. This generally consists of 100W plasma rifles, as well as bazookas.

Command Infantry: These stands are equipped with extensive communication gear scavenged

from the rubble of the cities and are equipped at least with light body armor. They are armed with assault rifles, or 100W plasma rifles later in the war.

Special Rules: Company Command Unit, Forward Observer

Recon Team: These are fast moving infantry equipped with light equipment, but extensive communication gear enabling them to spot Terminator incursions.

Special Rules: Forward Observer, Self Ordering, do not have to maintain cohesion.

SAM Team: These are infantry equipped with Stinger AA missiles for use against Skynet Flying Hunter Killers.

HUMAN TO&E

Early War Human Force:

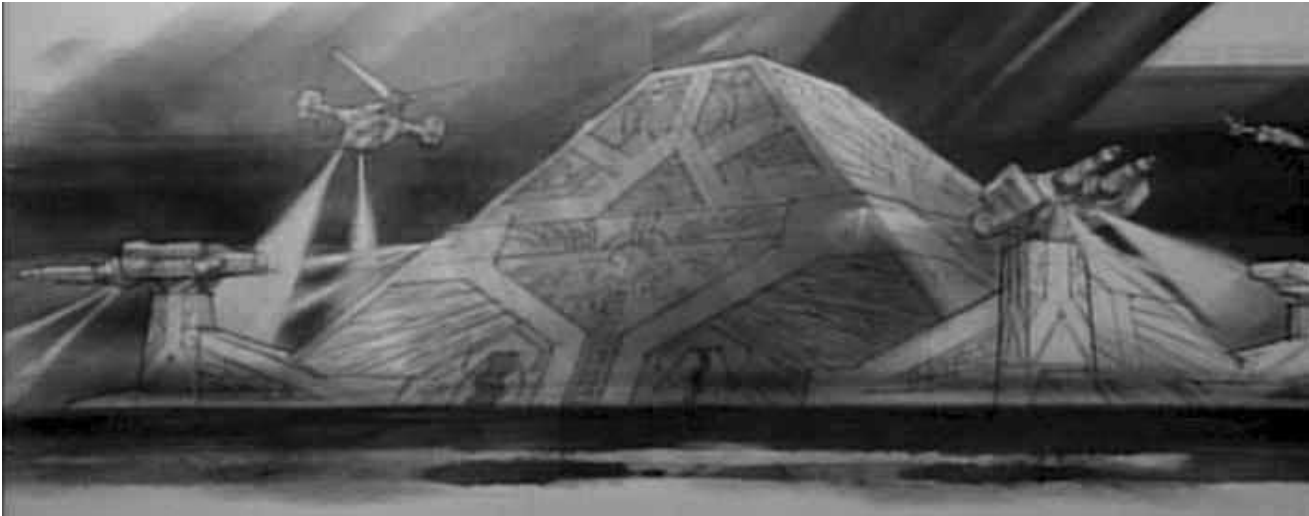
These forces were typical of human forces early in the war against the machines. They were equipped with whatever they could find, generally weapons looted from destroyed army or national guard facilities (those that survived the nuclear devastation). Some units may have captured plasma weapons from downed Terminators, but these were few and far between.

HQ: 1 platoon
Unlimited Platoons: 1-4 platoons
Limited Platoons: 0-2 platoons
Support Units: 0-2 platoons

HQ:
1 Command Infantry with Assault Rifles
1 Light Infantry with Assault Rifles
Cost: 9/18/27/36

Unlimited Platoons:
Line Platoon
4 Light Infantry with Assault Rifles
Cost: 4/8/12/16 each
and
0-2 Bazooka Teams
Cost: 7/14/21/28 each

Defensive Platoon
2-4 Light Infantry with Assault Rifles



Cost: 4/8/12/16 each
and
0-2 Sentry Dog Teams
Cost: 7/14/21/28 each

Limited Platoons:

Recon Team
2-4 Recon Infantry with Assault Rifles
Cost: 6/12/18/24 each

SAM Team
2-4 SAM Teams
Cost: 11/22/33/44 each

Support Platoons:

Machinegun Platoon
2-4 Machinegun Teams
Cost: 8/16/24/32 each
and
2-4 Light Infantry with Assault Rifles
Cost: 4/8/12/16 each

Assault Platoon
2-4 Regular Infantry with 40W Plasma Rifles
Cost: 5/10/15/20 each

Fast Attack Group
1-4 Gun Cars
Cost: 13/26/39/42 each

MID-LATE WAR HUMAN FORCE:

The below force is typical of human forces from the middle to late in the war. Most troops were equipped with plasma weapons produced in factories captured by the humans and turned over to their production needs. Garrison and rear echelon forces however, may still have older weaponry.

HQ: 1 platoon
Unlimited Platoons: 1-4 platoons
Limited Platoons: 0-2 platoons
Support Units: 0-2 platoons

HQ:
1 Command Infantry with 100W Plasma Rifles
1 Regular Infantry with 100W Plasma Rifles
1 Pick-up Truck
Cost: 25/50/75/100

or

1 Command Infantry with 100W Plasma Rifles
1 Minigun Team
Cost: 16/32/48/64

Unlimited Platoons:
Line Platoon
2-6 Regular Infantry with 100W Plasma Rifles
Cost: 5/10/15/20 each
and
0-4 Regular Infantry with 100W Plasma MG
Cost: 7/14/21/28 each

Defensive Platoon
2-4 Regular Infantry with 100W Plasma Rifles
Cost: 5/10/15/20 each
and
0-2 Sentry Dog Teams
Cost: 7/14/21/28 each

Assault Platoon
2-4 Assault Infantry with Bazookas
Cost: 7/14/21/28 each
or
2-4 Assault Infantry with Demolition Charges
Cost: 7/14/21/28 each

Limited Platoons:
Recon Team
2-4 Recon Infantry with 40W Plasma Rifles
Cost: 7/14/21/28 each

Transport Group
1-5 Pick-up Trucks
Cost: 12/24/36/48 each

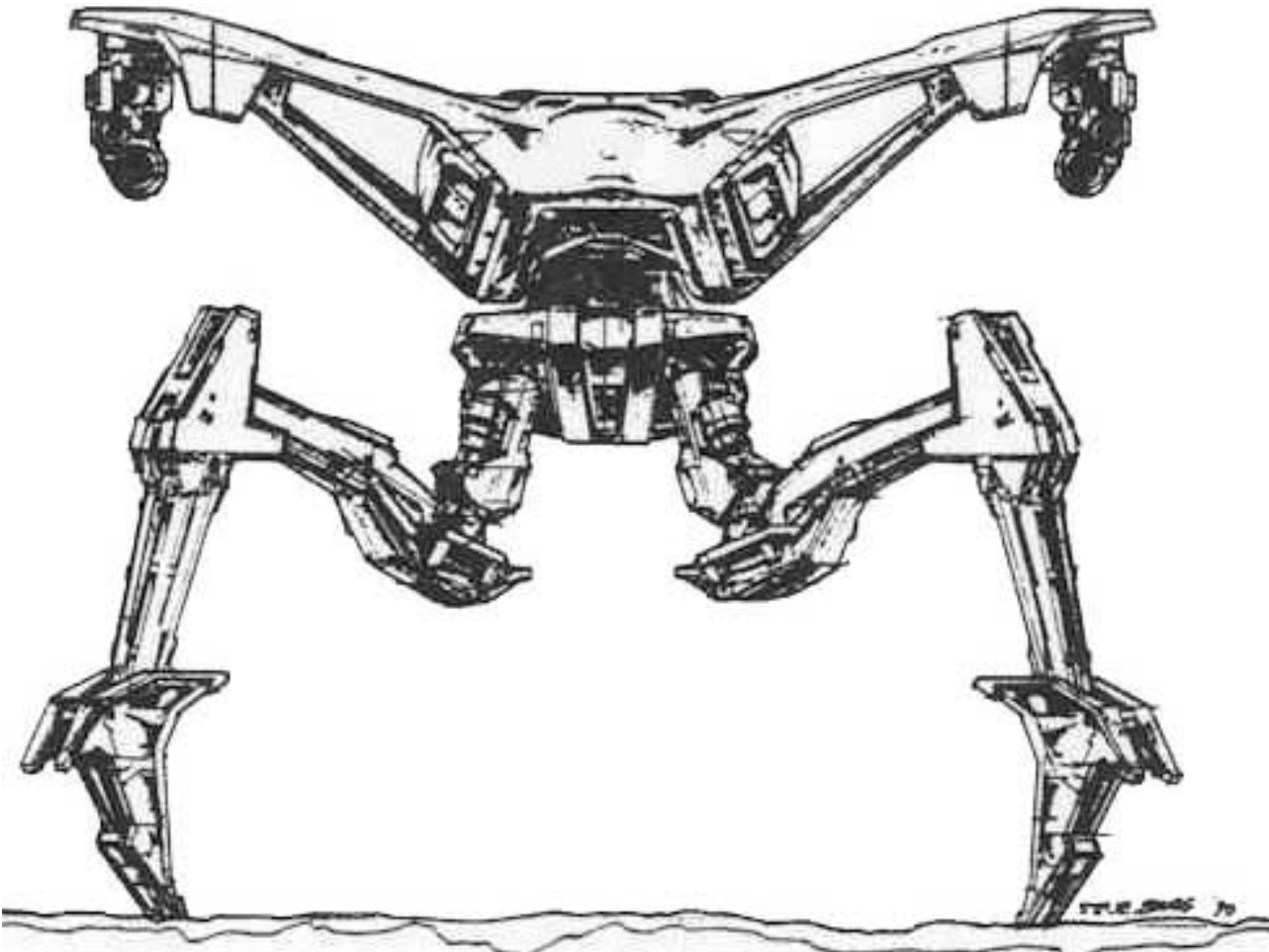
Air Defense Team
SAM Team
2-4 SAM Teams
Cost: 11/22/33/44 each
or
2-4 AA Pick-up Trucks
Cost: 16/32/48/64 each

Support Platoons:
Minigun Platoon
2-4 Minigun Teams
Cost: 10/20/30/40 each
and
2-4 Regular Infantry with 100W Plasma Rifles
Cost: 5/10/15/20 each

Heavy Assault Platoon
2-4 Heavy Assault Infantry
Cost: 8/16/24/32 each

Fast Attack Group
1-4 Gun Cars
Cost: 13/26/39/42 each

Heavy Support Group
1-4 Armored Pick-up Trucks
Cost: 15/30/45/60 each



Centauri Grotto LCV Tender

By REID HUPACH

HOUSE Goforit lies along the Centauri Drazi border. At times that border is a little hazy as to where it lies, or at least it is when convenient. After one of House Goforit's survey and mining ships got lost in hyperspace, the vessel's captain decided to go to real space and get new bearings. The system they appeared in, happened to lie within territory claimed by the Drazi.

As part of their normal routine while waiting for their jump engine to recharge, they started to do a survey of the system. For all intents and purposes, the system was quite normal, red sun, four planets and a large asteroid field. Minutes before being able to jump away, one of their probes made a startling discovery, a large Q-40 deposit on two adjacent asteroids, which could be easily reached and mined. The captain dropped a beacon in the system and returned home fast.

House Goforit's dilemma was to put in a mining operation, get the Q-40 and get back out without the Drazi finding out and sending a fleet to stop them. A base was out of the question, too easily spotted from a distance, a large fleet would also draw too much attention. It was decided to take one of their older Lias vessels and convert it to tend a small fleet of LCVs.

A squadron composed of an Ore Barge, an Altarian Destroyer and the first Grotto with 12 LCVs was dispatched to the system. The LCVs consisted of eight Lupa class and four cargo haulers. Upon their arrival, the Q-40 was located and mining ensued. Time was a factor because everyone involved realized that it was only a matter of time before the Drazi would notice the activity in the system and come to investigate.

The mining went along well since the deposits were easily accessible on the asteroids. After only nine days most of the Q-40 was extracted, but then what House Goforit feared most, happened. The Drazi jumped into the system with a small fleet to flush them out and capture the prized Q-40. The Altarian and the eight Lupas rose to the occasion and intercepted the Drazi while the Ore Barge and the Grotto moved away from the asteroid field to get clear for a jump out of the system.

The Altarian launched her fighters



and went to attack the Drazi flagship; the Lupas guarded his flanks and tried to gang up on the smaller vessels. The Ore Barge and the Grotto were able to escape, the Altarian seeing this, broke off and with the surviving Lupas jumped out in the opposite direction. Two of the Lupas which successfully leapt out with the Altarian were later lost with all hands in hyperspace but the rest returned to House Goforit safely. House Goforit was quite pleased with the utility and performance of the Grotto as a mobile base able to supply several small ships and protecting, at least temporarily, a relatively covert operation.

Soon after the head of House Goforit, Winot Goforit, bragged to the Centaurum about the success of the mission, several other houses decided to copy the design. Other uses have been found for the Grotto and its flotilla of LCVs from anti-pirate patrolling to deep exploration of systems. Since its first use, the Grotto has grown in its popularity as a utility ship.

There's a weasel in the henhouse and it's got babies

By REID HUPACH

HOUSE Goforit has been on the unpopular side with the Centaurum for many years. The systems they control are along

the not-so-profitable-for-trade Drazi border. By trying to keep their family fortune in the black they have had to resort to several other ventures. One of those ventures, mining speculation, almost put House Goforit in an embarrassing position.

It seems one of their mining survey ships got off course in hyperspace. Instead of getting totally lost, the captain decided to jump to real space to get new bearings. When they arrived they were in an uninhabited system with four planets and a large asteroid belt. While they were finding out with their star charts just where they were and recharging their jump engine, the sensor array devoted to mineral analysis lit up like fireworks. According to the readings a fair sized chunk of Q-40 was in two asteroids close to each other. Upon further investigation the two asteroids had once been one and had recently split revealing the Q-40 vein, a very rich vein. The bad news, this system was inside of Drazi claimed space.

House Goforit did not want to lose such a find and it was decided that an expedition to the system would be profitable. The catch was that they couldn't use normal mining procedures to get it out. They would have to keep it to a minimum. Also if they were discovered they would have to have a denyability factor. One of the less popular nephews was called in to head the project. They cobbled together an old Lias to carry and resupply a group of LCVs, an old freighter and to head the operation they gave the nephew, Canya, an

old Altarian to be his flagship.

Operations went along fine and after nine days almost all the Q-40 had been extracted, when things went wrong. Drazi spies had caught wind of "something" going on inside their territory so they sent a small patrol fleet to sniff around. That's when they found the operation and attacked.

SETUP

As the scenario starts it is 10 turns after the Drazi jumped into system. The map should be 40 x 60 hexes, 40 N-S, 60 E-W. The 5 hexes along the south edge are asteroid field all the way across.

The Drazi fleet enters along the western map edge within 10 hexes of the north edge, moving speed 8. The Centauri have attached the 4 light cargo LCVs to the Grotto.

The Grotto and the Virilisi Logistics ship start on the hex row 30, 7 hexes from the bottom, speed 0. The rest of the Centauri fleet can start anywhere within 6 hexes of that point at speed 4.

DRAZI FORCES

- 1 Nightowl Hyperspace Probe (S-8)
- 1 Strikebird Carrier (S-2)
- 12 Starsnakes
- 1 Warbird Cruiser (L-1)
- 1 Taileagle (V-4)
- 3 Stareagle Frigates (S-2)

CENTAURI FORCES

- 1 Grotto LCV Tender (Babcom)
- 1 Virilisi Logistics Ship (S-8)
- 1 Altarian (V-4)
- 6 Raziks
- 4 Light Transport LCV (RP+P 2, B5 Repository)
- 2 PC Lupas (V-4)
- 2 MC Lupas (V-4)
- 2 PL Lupas (V-4)
- 2 Esc Lupas (V-4)

OBJECTIVES

Drazi- Stop the Virilisi from leaving with the Q-40
Centauri- Get the Virilisi out of system by jumping out.

SPECIAL RULES

No jump engines work within 5 hexes of the asteroid fields. The jump engine on the Virilisi cannot operate due to the close proximity of so much unrefined Q-40 in its hold. The jump engines on the Grotto and the Altarian are just starting their 9th turn of charging.

(An SCS for the Grotto LCV Tender can be found in the Attachments folder)



THE DARK STAR

By Zero

-HUMOR-

In an earlier issue of BabCom (#18 - Oct/Nov 2002), Tyrel Lohr submitted (as a joke ship) an alternate version of the White Star - made in cooperation with the Shadows, and not the Vorlons. And what if that was not a joke? A hypothetical timeline for such a ship was already sketched out by Alex Kettle in BabCom #12 (April 2002).

The Minbari always seemed to consider themselves a 'higher' race. Easy subjects to put on the path of conquest and destruction. And so the Dark Star project (Shadow Star name was used by Tyrel) was born.

When Shadow agents first talked to the Minbari, it was the Warrior caste that listened to them the closest. The first weapon shipments followed soon after, and new equipment was installed on existing ships - due to the invasive nature of Shadowtech there weren't many problems about cooperation with existing systems. Soon black skinned variants of the Neshatan and Sharlin began to appear in secret staging areas, and a Tinashi with strange tentacle-like protrusions was seen near the EA-Minbari border.

Secret research outposts were established by the Worker Caste only weeks later, and this left the Religious Caste at a serious disadvantage. To maintain existing power balance within Minbari society during the modern, warlike age, Religious Caste members decided they needed more combat ships. The token forces they currently had were insignificant. In cooperation with both Workers and Shadows, they designed a ship meeting their requirements: small crew, able to take on stronger opponents by hit-and-run attacks with

heavy weapons and not requiring vast orbital shipyards. Soon the first manufacturing point was established, and more and more young priests began to train as their crews.

Shadow influence is seen from the very core of the ship. They are in most part grown over steel skeletons, using strange devices of unknown origin. During that growth, weapons are installed, part of them shipped from outside, part cultivated in other facilities. Internal systems of Minbari origin are also installed during growth. The first reports are that their capabilities after being overgrown with hull material increases drastically.

The Dark Star was designed with all-Shadow weaponry. Traditional Minbari weapons (Neutron Lasers and Fusion Cannons) were either too heavy or unable to put out a large quantity of firepower in a short period of time. The existing Molecular Pulsar Cannon project seemed adequate, but was abandoned, as Shadow weapons were better and now easily available. An all-pulse weapon loadout was chosen due to the projected hit-and-run mission profile: range was of no great importance as small, fast ships could quickly close in and then retreat; but only pulse weapons could project in mere seconds the firepower required to cripple a capital ship. Molecular Slicer Beams were also considered, but could only be mounted as spinal weapons on such a small craft. In addition, the coating of new Warrior hulls notably reduced their effectiveness - and fighting their own kind was a real possibility in the minds of the Dark Star's designers.

The Dark Star prototype showed much promise. It was fast, agile, could equally give and take damage and was capable of traveling anywhere due to its own jump drive. Unfortunately even the newest reactor,

overgrown with black skin and possessing unheard of power-to volume ratio, couldn't power all systems at once, but that was considered the price of miniaturization. Against Warrior Caste vessels (and as some stated, possibly new EA/Narn/Centauri as well) Jammers were useless and so could be shut off in which case Dark Stars could project their full firepower, relying on powerful armor and diffusers to protect their vital elements. In cases where the Jammer was effective however, it was considered worthy turning off a third of the weaponry to power the Jammer.

That led to another problem: Dark Star attacks should be fast and leave only debris... but if there were many enemy ships, one attack might not be enough. And, although targets might be pursued in hyperspace, that was not an option commanders desired. Again, Shadowtech was the answer. An agreement was made to utilize Vortex Disruptors. One refitted vessel, accompanying a squadron of normal ones, was seen as an effective way of forcing enemies to stay and fight. As such a vessel had to stay out of battle and only intervene when necessary, it was not given as many weapons as the basic model. Instead, this ship allowed for countering another shortcoming of the Dark Star: the lack of fighters. No carrier was able to accompany the small, fast vessels and the whole internal volume of the ship was already used. If firepower was not a concern however, a small hangar could be put in place of the forward weapons bay. Plans to make this a command vessel failed, as no one wanted to command a non-combatant when normal Dark Stars were available.

It is strongly recommended to view or print SCSs from StarOffice/OpenOffice, and not from attached .jpgs. OpenOffice can be downloaded for free from <http://www.openoffice.org>.

House Rules By BEN RUBERY

IN DEVELOPING my Star Wars conversion, I've looked at some of the basic mechanics of B5W and found that while I like the basic rules a lot, there are some little touches that I would add.

One thing I felt was not done well (or at all) was Aegis ships. While the Aegis Hyperion exists, it is more an anti-fighter ship and cannot intercept ballistic weapons directed at a ship it is guarding, as we see in modern warfare.

While Guardian Arrays allow ships to intercept for other ships, I would like a rule that represents the presence of Aegis type equipment aboard a ship rather than simply specialist weapons that give basically the same effects.

AEGIS SYSTEMS

To represent different technology levels and the amount of special equipment present on a ship (and so that Arsenal of Suck ships can field Aegis technology), I have come up with different types of Aegis system. The Aegis ship must specify which ship it will be protecting each turn. This ship is designated as the target (it is the target of incoming fire)

PRIMITIVE AEGIS

A ship with Primitive Aegis can intercept ballistic weapons targeted at a friendly ship it is escorting. It must be between the firing ship and the target. If the path of the ballistic fire (as measured from the hex the missiles were fired from and the hex the target ship is in) is within three hexes of the hex occupied by the Aegis ship then the Aegis ship may add its intercept to the intercept of the target ship.

However the intercept added by the Aegis ship is subject to degradation (the target ships intercept is treated normally).

AEGIS

A ship with Aegis can intercept ballistic and weapons fire at the target ship, but must be between the firing vessel and the target and be closer to the target than the firing vessel. It intercepts weapons fire normally when directed at the target ship. It cannot intercept fire from fighter weapons (but can intercept missiles fired from fighters) fired at the target ship.

ADVANCED AEGIS

A ship with Advanced Aegis can



intercept fire at the target ship as long as it is between the firing ship and the target or within three hexes of the target ship as long as the ship is not enormous (thus blocking arcs of fire if the Aegis ship is behind it). If a ship with Advanced Aegis is in the same hex as the target ship it can intercept fire directed at the target from fighter guns.

ESCORT CRAFT

This is an extract from the Star Wars conversion I am currently working on. Along with a rewrite of the boarding, intercept and ballistic rules (as well as a reworking of LCVs, fighters and shuttles) I have looked at escort craft, particularly for large ships like Star Destroyers and Star Cruisers escorted by Lancers and Corellian Corvettes.

Escort craft are dedicated anti-fighter craft that protect large and vulnerable ships. For a ship to use the escort rules it must be smaller than the ship it is protecting. It can only protect ships of HCV size or larger. When protecting command craft with advanced electronics (which have the command ship note on their SCS and in their description) it gains significant benefits.

An escort ship can intercept ballistic fire directed at the target ship as long as it is between the target ship and the firing ship.

An escort ship protecting a command ship targets fighters using the sum of the OEW or CCEW allocated by the command

ship and that escort craft. This allows escort ships and a command ship (like a Star Destroyer and Lancer Escort Frigates) to create a web of fire problematic for fighters.

A craft with the escort designation has one bonus point of CCEW if any CCEW is allocated. The ship's electronic systems are built to target small craft, and more efficiently track these small, fast targets compared to standard ship sensors.

These rules, if used, will slightly alter the balance of the game. A race on the Grome/Hurr/Alacan tech level would not have any ship with better than Primitive Aegis. The big four and most of the League would be capable of deployed Aegis ships, and races at the Minbari, Hyach or Yolu level of technology would be able to deploy Advanced Aegis ships.

Escort ships would be dedicated escorts, armed with virtually exclusively intercept and anti-fighter weapons, in order to protect their charges. A race with command cruisers of sufficient tech level to provide an initiative bonus to other ships would count as a command ship when protected by escort craft.

These are experimental rules and should be used with care, but I feel they capture what Aegis ships should behave like better than the Aegis pods on the Aegis Hyperion.

If adding these rules to homebrews, bear in mind that they can be open to abuse, and may

make it harder for fleets to simply eliminate the largest enemy craft in the first turn or two (the bomb magnet effect) due to escort and Aegis ships.

Hyperion Lambda (Rare Hyperion variant)

The Hyperion Lambda is a large escort cruiser designed to accompany even larger ships like the Poseidon Supercarrier. The Hyperion hull was readily available, and smaller ships like the Tethys were deemed unsuitable for the role, being too small and too easily destroyed to justify the cost. The Lambda was a new construction ship and featured many of the upgrades made to EA ships since the Minbari war.

The Hyperion Lambda was one of the casualties of President Clark's ascension to power, as funding was diverted to a series of black projects and away from such bread and butter projects of the military.

A prototype had been produced, and was field-tested escorting one of the last Avenger class carriers in anti-raider operations, but no production run was ordered.

After the EA civil war and the change of government the deployment of the Poseidon necessitated escort craft. The Aegis Hyperion was dusted off and a small production run was ordered.

I have made a number of changes to the AOG Aegis Hyperion. The ship used Aegis pods but lacked much in the way of firepower. Aegis ships in the modern era defend larger craft like carriers from incoming missiles.

This is not how it worked on the original Aegis Hyperion, which gained 6 free CCEW. I have reworked it, ditching the Aegis pods in favour of two side MPCs, and I have reworked the nose, placing an MPC where one is usually found on most Hyperions, and putting the SPBs on the nose in the medium plasma mounts (as the original Aegis Hyperion completely missed these out).

I've pointed it at 780, and while this is less than the 800 of the original Aegis Hyperion, I feel it is a bit fairer. With three MPCs, two anti-fighter racks, nine SPBs and four interceptors, it is a more effective escort unit, less effective at slapping fighters with masses of CCEW, but able to intercept for its charge and with three MPCs for either engaging fighters or enemy attack craft. It is an unofficial unit, and it should only be used with your opponent's permission.

BABYLON ROLEPLAYING GAME

Contents Preview

There has already been a great deal of speculation as to how the new Babylon RPG is going to look and what changes are going to be made to the d20 System. So, we'll take a dive into the 304 page main rulebook, due for release in late May, and see what goodies lie inside.

Introduction

Not a lot you can say about an introduction – except that, as with our Judge Dredd RPG, we have three sections aimed at gamers who are a) new to Babylon 5, b) new to the d20 System and c) veterans of the d20 System. If you are the latter, a few paragraphs summarize all the changes we have made to the rules for Babylon 5, giving you 90% of what you need to start playing the game immediately. This is followed by a short 'Welcome' chapter, setting the scene for the entire galaxy in whatever time period you are aiming to play.

Characters on Babylon 5

This, I think, is what many of you will be wanting to know – what characters you can play in the Babylon 5 RPG! We have gone for the usual race/class split, for reasons that will become obvious.

Anyway, the 'standard' player races are human, Centauri, Minbari, Narn, Drazi and Brakiri. We even have a section set aside detailing how such disparate characters could ever hope to work together as a 'party'. However, there is nothing written that Babylon 5 has to be 100% co-operative in nature – if you think about it, the television show itself demonstrates quite nicely how players could both work together and pursue their own goals...

Eight character classes are available, and we have made sure these are all as broad as possible – in fact, we had to make them more specific in playtesting as while they could reflect 99% of all the characters that appeared on the TV show (leaving aside the obvious special cases, such as the Technomages), they also meant that it was incredibly hard to justify almost any prestige



"We have tried to avoid railroading anyone in terms of skill choices and class features."

class! In the end, we think we have managed to run right down the middle, allowing the core classes to handle about 80% of all possible character types, with the prestige classes taking the strain for players who want something that little bit special.

Anyway, the classes available to begin with are; Agent (Morden and Refa are the obvious examples here, though the term covers any skilled operative, from an assassin to 'aggressive negotiator'), Diplomat (need not be politically minded – many corporations have need of diplomats in business dealings, as do some unions – Neeoma of the Dockers Guild is a low level diplomat), Lurker, Officer (split into pilot, fleet and ground forces), Scientist (one of the widest classes there is in capability and potential), Soldier (including security officers), Telepath and Worker (split into blue and white collar, allowing everything from dock loaders, to accountants, lawyers and ISN reporters).

When creating these classes, we actively looked

through the B5 seasons, trying to identify characters that did not fit any of these. Aside from the really esoteric personalities (which beg prestige classes or, in a few very rare cases, a new core class that will come later), nope, we have not spotted any!

All are very broad in scope, and we have tried to avoid railroading anyone in terms of skill choices and class features. If you have a specific character in mind, you can create him or her with this system.

Also included in this chapter are the new rules for hit points (very, very few!) and using Constitution as a bonus to stabilize, rather than granting bonus hit points. You do not want to get shot in this game, especially if a Medlab facility is not close by...

Skills and Feats

This chapter speaks for itself – we have gone through the skill list in the PHB, chucked out what was clearly not B5 in spirit, and added new skills where appropriate, as well as change certain skills that now operate slightly differently. Feats, on the other hand, are divided into General, Telepath and Racial categories.

We have, however, removed a lot of the combat orientated feats from the B5 RPG – don't worry, the likes of Weapon Focus are still in, but games of B5 should rarely focus squarely on combat. In this game, feats such as Harm's Way, Latent Telepath and First Contact Protocol are far more important. . . If you are of non-human origin, they are plenty of opportunities to concentrate on abilities that can set members of your race far apart from anyone else – be it a Narn's Priestly Devotion, a Minbari's Way of the Warrior or a Drazi's Might Makes Right. Personally, I like the Drazi's Green or Purple feat, which gives certain bonuses (and penalties) for this race's mob mentality.

Combat

The Combat chapter introduces the bulk of actual changes from the standard d20 System. I won't run through them all here though. Suffice

to say that Armour Class is gone, armour now reduces damage, a few changes have been made to attacks of opportunity, and rules are in place to handle thin atmospheres, low gravity, explosive decompression and a host of other dangers. The vehicle rules also appear here – as I mentioned elsewhere, we have used a converted Dragonstar system, as this is quick, easy, and scales nicely between characters, vehicles and spacecraft, allowing your Thunderbolt to bear down on a speeding terrorist truck across the plains of Mars.

However, we just could not resist tweaking things to make it more ‘Babylon 5’ in feel! So, you will find everything you need to reflect the Starfuries’ afterburners, ejector seat and pivotal thrusters (gives a hell of an advantage, I can tell you!). Artificial gravity is a feature of many advanced spacecraft, as is the ability to create jump points, and the living ships of the Vorlons are just plain nasty. . .

Equipment and Vehicles

One thing I did not want the Babylon 5 RPG to become was too focused on technology. After all, this is not Star Trek – characters and their actions are what matters, not Type IV positronic phase flux capacitors.

However, you cannot get away from the fact that there are a lot of cool ships and weapons in the TV show – so, I hope we have picked the right middle ground between the two.

Full rules are given for black markets (anyone on Babylon 5 is going to want to establish a smuggling line that bypasses customs!), as well as the most common weapons of the various races – these will be expanded further in the forthcoming ‘race’ books that will cover each government in more detail than has ever been seen before for Babylon 5.

I promise. However, you will still find shock sticks, PPGs, Minbari holdout lasers, changeling nets (mad if you use one. . .), data crystals, flak jackets, Narn battle suits and much more. The spacecraft section has full rules and guidelines for the costs of running a spacecraft (including docking and maintenance fees), as well as a huge variety of ships seen throughout the galaxy, both commercial and military. Everything from a Maintenance Bot and Delta-V fighter to Hyperion cruisers and Vorlon transports are detailed here, as well as full descriptions of their special abilities and weaponry.

Telepaths

So often turned away by their own kind, telepaths at least get a chapter all to themselves in the Babylon 5 RPG.

I’ll preview these rules fully at a later date but basically they revolve around an inherent P-Rating (which never changes, of course), the Telepathy skill and a range of abilities that are acquired with practice and training. Yup, Deep



The Babylon 5 diplomatic station has never been truly and fully detailed in terms of maps, specifications, locations and personalities – until now.

Scanning, Pain and Jamming are all in here.

All Alone in the Night

The Babylon 5 diplomatic station has never been truly and fully detailed in terms of maps, specifications, locations and personalities – until now.

This chapter contains everything you need to turn the station into a living, breathing place that your players can actually explore (rather than you having to say ‘well, you arrive on B5. . .’). You can even learn how to join the Transport Association, and what benefits you will get from it in the future.

In addition, information is given concerning jumpgate operation, damaging the station’s exterior (it can happen. . .), the defence grid (do NOT attack) and what compliment of craft is typically on board and under EarthForce control. Details on how diplomacy works on the station, what the quarters are like, how much they cost, BabCom, StellarCom, the central computer, medical facilities, the process of law and order, the Universe Today – and all this before we even get into specific locations!

We received a little criticism with the Judge Dredd RPG for not including stats of the main characters in the main rulebook.

Well, we have listened to you this time. Everyone of note is detailed here (though Ivanova seems to have a little ‘classified’ sticker obscuring one of her feats. . .), plus we have also

added a giant selection of ready NPCs (such as commercial telepaths, market traders, dock workers, etc. . .) for you to slide quickly and easily into your games.

The Babylon 5 station really is an entire setting unto itself – you could play out an entire campaign here without ever leaving. . .

And the Sky Full of Stars

Fitting the rest of the galaxy into one chapter was always going to be something of a challenge and, inevitably, we have left many things for the more detailed sourcebooks to cover (the first of which will be the Earth Alliance).

However, full details here are given for traveling through space, using jumpgates (or denying their use), plus navigating through hyperspace, whether you want to use the standard travel routes or not.

Plenty of information is then given on the major governments, their systems and their customs, giving Games Masters enough to start launching their players out amongst the stars. Also covered here are a variety of other useful topics, such as why the EA has identicards, ISN, the Psi Corps (including rules for sleeper drugs, and regulations for all human telepaths), the Centauri noble houses, the Minbari attitude to service and honour and much, much more.

We have also included racial traits for many members of the League of Non-Aligned Worlds – in general, we recommend that players stick to those detailed in the first chapter, as these are a little weaker in terms of game balance. But hey, if you really want to play an Abbai, Gaim, Markab (heh!), Pak’m’a’ra or Vree, everything you need is presented.

Our central goal for the Babylon 5 RPG was to provide a gateway for Games Masters and players to explore pretty much whatever part of the galaxy they wished. We have provided as many tools as we could fit into the main rulebook – it is up to you to find adventure!

Signs and Portents

This will be the most controversial chapter of the lot, I am sure – this is a detailed (and I mean detailed) episode synopsis of the entire first season of Babylon 5. The question you will all ask, I am sure, is – why only the first season? Allow me to explain. . .

I have said before that I am a self-confessed B5 geek and so aimed to produce the kind of game that I would want to see (and buy) myself. So, when the question came ‘what do we include in this game’, my answer had to be ‘everything’.

You can’t actually do that in 304 pages! However, I knew that simply doing a dry list of all the events as and when they happened would be a) boring and b) completely miss the point of what B5 is about. We were also aware that there were many people out there who (unlike us real fans!) did not have every episode on video or



DVD – some were only going to know the most basic things about the setting, while others would have inevitably missed a few episodes.

So, we have gone for a very detailed episode synopsis that can (if you wish) serve as a framework to an entire campaign covering the Earth year 2258.

We do not just detail the events in the episode, however – that, too, would begin to get boring. Instead, we have also added many new background entries to explain various things that crop up in each episode (such as how the Thenta Makur works, how Transport Routes are granted, what happened to the Dilgar, etc. . .), new rules (pain givers can be found here, as well as racial traits for the Dilgar, if you really want to go down the outcast route), minor characters (N’grath and Bester, for example) and, well, just about everything you need to know to run a decent game of B5 that did not fit logically elsewhere in the rulebook, but is placed nicely next to its relevant episode.

And yes, all this is backed up by complete and functional index, meaning you will never have to go far to find anything, even in a rulebook of 304 pages.

Babylon 5 RPG Release Schedule

Based on info from Mongoose Matt and an online chat on March 5, 2003. All information is tentative.

Title	Book Type	Page Count	Release Date	Cost(US)
Babylon 5 RPG and Fact Book Signs and Portents	Main book, hardcover	304	May 2003	44.95
The Fiery Trial	Season book, softcover	128	May 2003	24.95
The Coming of Shadows	Season book, softcover	128	June 2003	24.95
The Earth Alliance	Race book, hardcover	200	July 2003	34.95
The Minbari Federation	Race book, hardcover	200	July 2003	34.95
Point of No Return	Season book, softcover	128	September 2003	24.95
The Centauri Republic	Race book, hardcover	200	October 2003	34.95
The Narn Regime	Race book, hardcover	200	November 2003	34.95
Shadows and Vorlons	Race book, hardcover	200	?	34.95
Free Traders	? softcover	128	?	24.95
Technomages	? hardcover	200	?	34.95
League of Non-Aligned Worlds	? hardcover	200	?	34.95

In addition, we give plenty of ideas for plot lines, scenarios and campaign hooks alongside each episode. These allow players to either become directly involved in such events, or have similar situations mirror themselves in the players’ own encounters.

In addition, notes are also provided as to what players in the galaxy might hear of the events on Babylon 5, all serving to provide a coherent structure to a campaign before the Games Master even starts writing. It also makes the players aware that there is an entire galaxy out there that will not simply stop and stand by while they complete their own goals – as covered in this chapter, this can lead to some very tense situations, wherever the players are in the galaxy.

Campaigns on Babylon 5

When I started writing this chapter, I figured I could fit everything into 5 pages – fat chance! We begin by covering a typical ‘starfarer’s campaign’, where players just use the station as a base of operation and play through a number of unrelated scenarios to ‘see what is out there’. This will suit some groups down to the ground.

However, as fans of the show will be aware, a great deal more is possible in Babylon 5. You want huge, convoluted story arcs? This chapter tells you how to put them together.

You want to know just what makes Babylon 5. . . well, Babylon 5? This chapter will tell you what to emphasize.

There are also sections on characterization, B5 iconography, playing canon/non-canon campaigns, as well as a huge list of campaign jump off points you can use to kickstart your own ideas.

This is also where the prestige classes lie – I won’t give the full list just yet, but making an appearance will be the Mutari, Planetary Surveyor, Psi Cop, and True Seeker.

The rulebook winds up with a full and complete glossary (including a few things even I did not know before I started this project!), plus index, rules summary and character sheets.

- Matthew Sprange

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<http://www.mongoosepublishing.com>

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Never Fear Answers,



Only Fear Running Out Of Questions

Online Chat
with

MONGOOSE
PUBLISHING

The following is from the online chat with Mongoose Matt (Matthew Sprange - Mongoose Publishing) at EN World on March 5, 2003.

What's the full title?

The Babylon 5 Roleplaying Game and Fact Book. With a subtitle of Signs & Portents.

Is JMS involved directly in any way with the B5 game?

Yes and no. The main rulebook is what you might call 'standard' stuff - all being derivative of the TV show, films and novels, so it requires less of an overseeing. However, he will be getting very involved with the Centauri, Minbari and all the other race books, I am told.

How closely will the game follow the series?

110%. Seriously. If you see it on the screen, you will get it in the game. No stone is being left unturned. Early on, we decided we would try to fit *everything* into this new game, from a background perspective. Can't be done in one volume, of course, but we are doing pretty well so far!

Is Bab5 gonna have rules for ship-to-ship combat?

Yes. For the main rulebook, we are using a derivative of the Dragonstar rules with a big dollop of B5 flavour and special rules dumped in. Basically, the DS system scales very well between character, surface, air and space combat, tying everything together as one whole. Which is what we were primarily looking for, as B5 should be about characters, *not* just cool technology. However, we may look at doing an advanced space combat supplement later on, as I think this may be quite popular.

I'd also like to know how you decided to handle "research." Like for example, when G'Kar researches that his homeworld's telepaths were all slaughtered during the First Shadow War.

This is basically tied into the skill system - we have elevated the use of skills far beyond anything you have seen in a d20 game before. Skills maketh the character in a *big* way - you cannot shoot yourself out of all problems, so doing things like research and diplomatic negotiations are central to many actions.

One of the basic effects of the d20 system is that typically at low to mid, characters need to min/max a particular skill/stat combination in order to succeed with any degree of consistency, discouraging multiclassing and well rounded characters, which are both prevalent in B5's canon. How will Mongoose's d20 modifications handle jack of all trades characters at low-mid levels? Will there be a "degree of success mechanic?"

This is typically scaled by level, but also by the degree of synergy you can have between related skills. A good example of the former is documented in the first story arc for the game,



Fiery Trial, that shows the scaling of DCs in progress, though the main rulebook gives the guidelines for this.

Will the D&D PHB be required to play the game? Specifically - will GMs and Players constantly be looking up rules in two different books to look up skills and feats, or will the relevant ones be reprinted in the B5 rulebook?

I won't lie - you will likely need both, though the PHB will probably be picked up only 10% of the time, as we have changed so many of the basic skills and feats. That said, we are not going to reprint something like Weapon Focus just for the fun of it. If it is a straight duplication, we kept it in the PHB. Makes more room for the B5 setting material which, I am guessing, is what at least 50% of customers are going to want above all else

How will you handle the elements like contacts, allies, enemies, influence, access to higher tech-levels... all those fun things that White Wolf handles in Backgrounds and GURPS handles in Advantages.
This is split into three - at a very basic level, skills

(Diplomacy, Gather

Information, Intimidate, etc.), feats (such as belonging to a powerful noble Centauri family from 1st level) and class features (the Diplomat class scores big time here). Over time, characters in B5 will have built up a range of contacts and allies via all three methods (not forgetting good old fashioned playtesting, of course!). These will become vital as characters start to become movers and shakers in the galaxy.

How is Bab5 gonna mesh with the rest of D20 (I read something about no AC)?

If something in d20 worked, we kept it. If not, we ditched it. AC has been replaced by Defence Value, which is based off Reflex saves, as with Judge Dredd (though the saving throw values are all different in B5). Armour actually reduces damage, there is a new psychic system in there, people don't have very many hit points and, well, lots of things! However, by using the d20 System at its core, you can also port elements of

B5 to Dragonstar, Armageddon 2089 or even Judge Dredd. . .

What can you tell us about the new Psionic rules?

Hmm.. . Well, every telepath has a P-Rating which, of course, never changes. This is basically what is used as a saving throw against his abilities. He chooses an ability to use, such as Deep Scan, Fabricated Reality (some are involuntary, such as Accidental Scan and Danger Sense), and makes a Telepathy check at a required DC. Certain things effect this, such as being in hyperspace or wearing gloves. That, in a nutshell is it - though there is a lot built into the

system that allows you to use abilities to a greater effect if you have a good P-Rating, plus some abilities are reliant on others. Oh, and it is telepathy, not psionics.

So do you have to pick each individual ability? Are they something akin to feats? Or skills?

Neither, really. All telepaths have access to certain basic abilities, and can add more as they get more experienced. However, you have to be able to Surface Scan before you can Deep Scan.

Are the Psionics rules gonna be usable with any Psionics stuff previously published for D20?

No - we make no effort (!) to make new d20 games compatible. If they turn up that way, fine, but we will **never** compromise B5 just for the sake of better d20 integration. As far as we are concerned they are different games, even if they share similar systems.

How is the P-rating calculated? Is it random at character generation or "bought"?

Basically, there are a number of set categories that you can choose - P1-2, P3-5 and so on. Within each, the P-Rating is random. However, you lose out on skill points and possibly feats as you go up the P-Rating scale, which can really hurt low level characters as they struggle to keep pace with their friends.

Will Rangers be a PRC? If so, will they appear in the main book or in a supplement? Will Rangers be broken...or get the shaft?

To begin with, Rangers will be a Prc. That said, we are actually planning two types - the 'true' Anla'shok, and the ISA Ranger, which will come later. They will first appear in the Coming of Shadows sourcebook, which will be the third release for the game. However, in the fullness of time, they will be getting their own tome.

What Core Classes can we expect to see in Bab5?

Let me see if I can recall this without notes - Agent, Diplomat, Lurker, Scientist, Soldier, Officer,

Telepath, Worker.

What's an Agent?

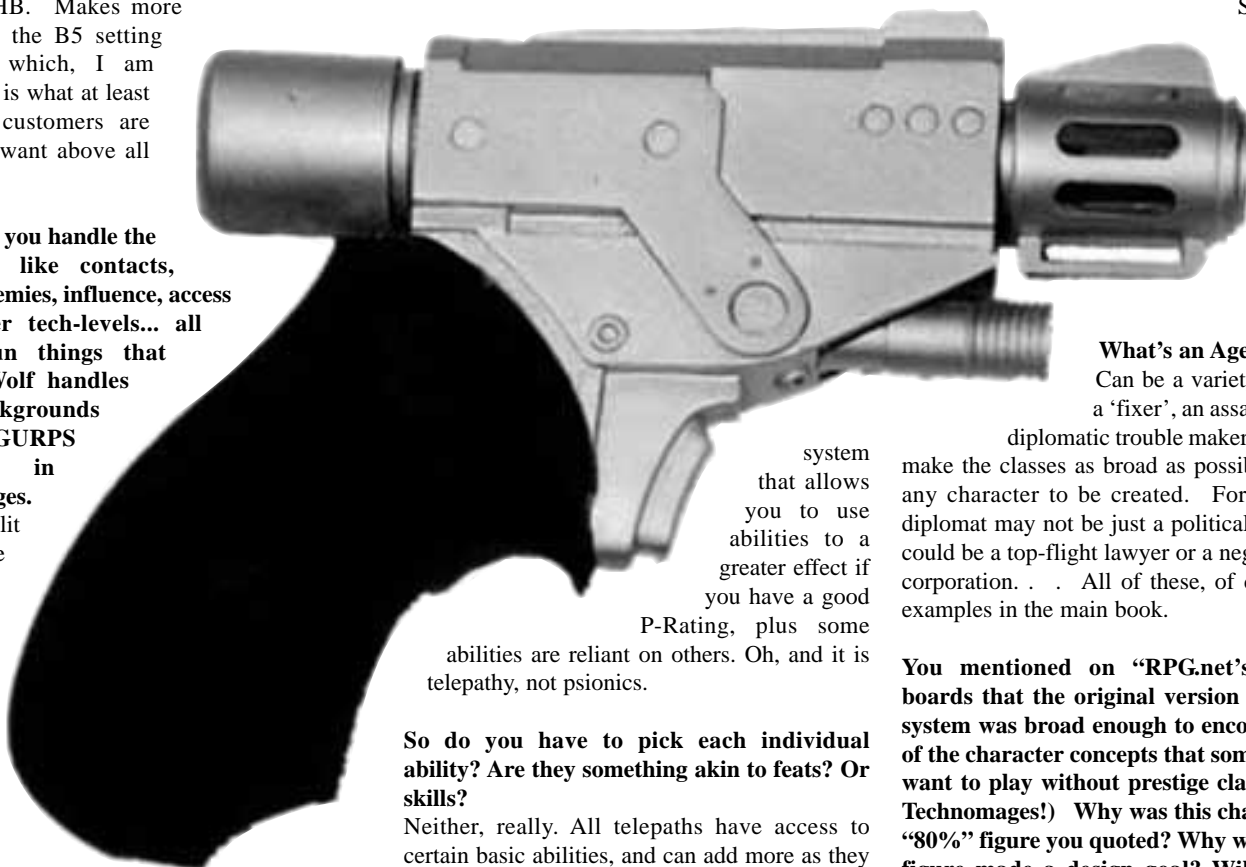
Can be a variety of things - a 'fixer', an assassin, a spy, a diplomatic trouble maker - we tried to make the classes as broad as possible, to allow any character to be created. For example, a diplomat may not be just a political animal - he could be a top-flight lawyer or a negotiator for a corporation. . . All of these, of course, have examples in the main book.

You mentioned on "RPG.net's" message boards that the original version of the class system was broad enough to encompass 99% of the character concepts that someone would want to play without prestige classes. (Pesky Technomages!) Why was this changed to the "80%" figure you quoted? Why was this 80% figure made a design goal? Will the other 19% be provided for free on Mongoose's website?

No, the other 19% will appear in another chapter as Prcs :) B5 has extremely strong archetypes, which is precisely why we did not use a classless system (we seriously considered it). People, I think, want to say they are a Psi Cop, Ranger or whatever - and wear it like a badge. PRCs also give us a chance to introduce new class features in a far more flexible way, steering them directly towards the archetype. A Psi Cop, for example, is far more than just a good telepath. . . As for Technomages, they will appear in Coming of Shadows too, but they are crying out for their own book. . .

Will Technomages be a PRC or a straight class?

Well, we want to do them justice - so the Technomage that appears in Coming of Shadows is a PRC, but is classed as a 'student' of the Technomages, not someone raised by them from





birth. That guy will appear in their own book, but GMs (and players, for that matter) will have everything they need to at least introduce these guys early on in the game's line up.

What level will this cap out at? 20? Higher?

We actually haven't set any real pre-defined limits, and there is no real reason why people cannot go above 20th level if they are playing high-powered games. However, we will structure the main characters for 20 levels total. So Sinclair, for example, starts out at 8th level, and G'Kar at 10th. Vir, if I remember right, begins as a 1st level Diplomat. Level progression, though, is slower in B5.

Will there be stats to play the Shadows and/or Vorlons?

Not in the main rulebook. We would never have been able to do them justice in the space available. However, the GM does have some guidelines on what to do if the players suddenly decide to try to knock off Kosh. . . The Shadows & Vorlons sourcebook on the other hand. . . 128 pages stuffed full of material on these chaps - sound good?

Do all races have the same ECL and do you think this rightly reflects the series?... those space elves seemed to be able to kick the crap out of everyone else... with one hand tied behind their back :D

Yes - and you are right, the Minbari were an absolute bitch to balance. If anything, I would have made them even more powerful than they are now :) However, everything still balances out quite nicely.

So everyone has the same ECL?

Correct.

Even the Vorlons?

To get an idea of the power of a Vorlon, flick through Deities & Demigods

How deeply will the common races of the Bab5 Universe be covered?

In the main rulebook, you will have everything you need in terms of personality, physical traits, their governments, technology and all the other necessities. If you want more (!), each of the major races (including humans!) is getting a 200 page hardback packed full of new rules and background. This is what I meant by us wanting to do absolutely **everything** in B5. Literally no stone will get left unturned. The B5 setting is just too good for us to squander this opportunity.

Will all the ISA races be given the same attention?

No, because the ISA does not exist yet.

However, we have full rules and details for the Drazi, Brakiri, Vree, Abbai, Gaim, Pak'ma'ra - more will be added later.

How have you dealt with the differing tech level issues among the races? I guess there would be some thought (by some people) to balance the races against each other like in D&D.

This is reflected in their equipment more than anything else but, at a personal level, there is little enough between them - everyone has a PPG or equivalent. On the other hand, being an RPG, it does not always have to be fair. Minbari ships are sick in this game. They are truly terrifying. Start running. Now.

Will there be rules regarding creating characters like Sinclair/Valen, going FROM one race to another, like adding a template?

You know, we spent a lot of time on this - right after we finished the main rulebook, we had to deal with the 'Deleenn question'. . . In the end, no. There are no changes, game wise. She is still effectively Minbari. She gets no new skills or feats. There is nothing you can do with the rules in this case. Which, I think, is probably how it should be.

So much for teeps, but what about teeks? And will there be anything on experimental methods of increasing P-rating - both of the main teeps on the show got boosted (Talia by Ironheart, Lyta by the Vorlons).

Just been working on that today, actually, in Talia's case. And I believe Bruce is going to have all sorts of interesting rules for Psi Corps experiments in the Earth Alliance book. However, as to Lyta's true powers as a Vorlon Agent, I am afraid you are going to have to wait for those.

Will this book use the D&D Hit Point standard or did you change it? If so, what kind of system are you using to keep track of damage? Does it involve a "deathspiral" effect (you take penalties as you take more damage)?

No - we kept it quick and easy. Stabilisation rules are a little different, in that they are affected by Con, but we kept degradation out of things. Combat has been made very deadly, and a lot of the 'battles' will take place in the political or criminal arenas.

Since DragonStar is going to be the ship to ship combat base, will we need the DragonStar books, in order to play this aspect of the game?

No, all relevant rules (and they have been altered) are in the B5 main rulebook. All you



need is that and the PHB.

Will we have ship stats for Capitol ships as well as single manned fighters?

Yes. Of course. Hyperions, Sharlins (eek!), Starfuries, Shuttles, Frazis - all in there!

If combat is going to be highly deadly, are there going to be additional rules for subdual and knocking people out?

Not additional rules - but greater emphasis is naturally placed on subdual attacks. This is the cool thing about the B5 RPG - it plays so differently to any other d20 System game I have tried. Kinda difficult to explain, but you'll get it

MONGOOSE PUBLISHING

Quis Partem Ichneumonis cupit?

SPECIAL REPORT MONGOOSE CHAT

- not when you read the rules but when you actually play. . .

Will the Shadows & Vorlons SB have stuff on the other First Ones too, like the Walkers at Sigma?

That decision has not been made yet - I am half tempted to give the First Ones their own book, complete with rules on actually playing them at the dawn of time. However, we'll have to see how that goes.

Will there be a supplement for high-level games?

Not any time soon (like, within the first 6 months), but it is a distinct possibility - what I would like to do is put out a book that expands on Chapter 9 of the main rulebook, detailing exactly how to run a cool B5 campaign and give your players the screaming willies!

Will there be TV photos or art (Better than Chameleon's)? Matt what kind of Art can we expect in the book? Please don't let it ALL be stills from the series some CGI images for the ships would be awesome and some nice clean clear images for the races... can we expect this sort of thing?

The vast majority will be clips from the shows and films. However, we have some cool artwork being commissioned - a completely new galaxy map, floorplans for, well, the entire B5 station, technical diagrams. The works! Lots of CGI - to see what we are capable of, check out Armageddon 2089 - in many ways, a forerunner of the B5 RPG.

Okay. So we're going to have the Core Book, and race books... Can we also expect to see gear books, Psi books, critter books, vehicle books, and so forth? What's on the plate so far?

Basically, I want to concentrate on the real 'tool' stuff first - so the first set of releases will concentrate on the major races and the seasons (years) up to the 3rd. That gives players and GMs most of the strong archetypes to play with. After that, we'll start to diversify - taking Vorlons apart (!), giving rules for free traders, that kind of thing. It will be a while before you see an equipment splat book in the B5 line

Will the book(s) cover the entire series or just the first couple seasons? Will there be information on playing in each major timeframe of Bab5? Pre Shadow War, in the Shadow War, and post Shadow War?

Yes and no - the main rulebook features only 2258 and the B5 station itself in really anal (!) detail. However, there are plenty of hints and tips for running in other timelines and other locations. However, if you want superdetailing (like, for example, complete maps of the major Centauri cities. . .), then you will have to wait until the appropriate sourcebook. Sorry to do things this way but there really is too much information for us to do all at once, if we want to do things properly.

Will the B5 RPG go into what might have been, like what would have happened with Crusade and/or Legend of the Rangers if they hadn't been killed by stupid execs?

Well, our license covers those areas but I can't really make any promises just yet. I have a feeling that certain people will wait until they see our Minbari books, etc, before making that decision for us

Will the Babylon 5 galaxy be mapped out

Yes. And this time, Z'ha'dum is on it

Will there be a system for designing planets based on a set of parameters that fit within the Bab5 Universe?

Not in the main rulebook, though GMs have plenty of help there with alternate environments and such things. However, we have gone into rather a lot of detail about jumpgate use and hyperspace navigation

Also, the Dragonstar starship rules bug me a lot because of the size cap. Are you going to re-adjust the ship size classes to include everything from worker bees to planet destroyers?

Yes :) Messing around with the size classes and what they actually mean is one of our major tweaks. However, keep in mind that things like Planet Killers and Babylon 5 itself are too large for normal ship combat. They are handled in more abstract ways (your Starfuries can damage B5 but they are never going to blow it up).

Will there be optional rules for resolving space combat using the B5 Wars game or Full Thrust or something similar? Or will the rules be complete enough that this isn't necessary?

It is not a war game, though there is miniatures support. We were originally going to set aside several pages to convert between the RPG and B5 Wars but with the sad demise of AoG, that was no longer possible. This is **not** a B5 Wars replacement - this is the RPG. However, as I said, we may return to an advanced ship combat game at a later date. . .

Do you plan to use the ship names/classes by AoG? There is lots of intellectual work there and it would be a shame to lose all that.

Determining what is canon and what is not is a real minefield for B5. In the end, we chose just to treat the TV show as canon and nothing else - however, that does not mean we don't delve into the other material when there is cool stuff to be found. In terms of these ships, you will see a lot of them in the RPG, and we have been using the game as a reference for some weapons fits. However, some will not make it.



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