

BABYLON 5

JANUARY 2002

BABYLON 5 WARS * FLEET ACTION * GROPOS

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Brakiri Industrialism

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Narn Regime

Cascar Empire

Gaim Intelligence

Descari Monarchy

Earth Alliance

Yolu Confederation

Markab Colonials

Torata Monarchy

Kor-Lyan Republic

Vree Empire

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PAK'MA'RA: FICTION



Without a Shadow of a doubt

Fiction:
By TODD BOYCE

VLUR sat in his room, contently munching on the carcass of some small creature when the chime on his door bleeps. Standing up, he walks to the entrance and speaks a command in his native Pak'ma'ra tongue. Sliding up and away the portal reveals a human with dark hair and a dark suit. He was smiling slightly.

The human was about to speak but the Pak'ma'ra holds up a hand making him pause. A tentacle twitches in annoyance as Vlur turns around and rummages through the mess on his endtable, and then through the mess in several drawers before finding his translator.

"Yes?" he asks the human.

"Good evening, Ambassador. Could I have a word with you?"

This human made the Pak'ma'ra feel slightly uneasy but he simply shrugs and replies "You have spoken several." Vlur returns to his seat.

"Yes," he says after a pause, smiling broadly now. Taking the cue that he could enter, the man steps inside. "I would like to know what you want."

The Pak'ma'ra looks at the man blankly. "When?"

"Well, right now as a matter of fact."

"Right then I wanted to pick up this leg and eat the meat off of it," Vlur replies holding up a leg of the carcass. "I will eat it now," he says just before his tentacles pull the meat off of it.

"You misunderstand, Ambassador. I mean what do you desire most?" he asks, hiding his revulsion to the meal in front of the alien.

Again the Pak'ma'ra stares at the man blankly. "When?"

The man frowned slightly. "Is there anything you want to accomplish, anything that you want to achieve?"

Vlur blinks. "The Pak'ma'ra are accomplishing many tasks and achieving many things. It would take too long to list them."

"I don't mean other Pak'ma'ra, I mean you."

Vlur's tentacle twitches again. "I speak for the Pak'ma'ra."

"Yes, you are the Ambassador. As the Ambassador, what do you want for your people?"

Vlur eats another leg realizing this was not going to be a short conversation. "That has already been decided."

"What is it?" he asks, a slight edge of annoyance creeping into his voice.

"I said it would take too long to list, there are many Pak'ma'ra," Vlur says pulling yet another leg off the carcass.

The man's eyes shift around the room as he considers changing his conversational tactics. "The Centauri

are a threat to your people, aren't they Ambassador?"

"Yes, they have been aggressive," he says.

A smile once again crept over the human's face. "My associates could help you with that."

Vlur chewed on some of the toes of his meal for a moment and says "They gained nothing in attacking us and have left our world. Their ideas are strange."

"They could become aggressive towards you again."

"Yes," the Ambassador replies, not understanding his point.

"And we could help prevent that from happening."

"If they become aggressive, help would be appreciated. They are not aggressive towards us right now."

"We could help you prevent them from ever being aggressive towards you again, even help you expand your empire, perhaps even replace the Centauri as a major power in the galaxy." The human smiles again, the conversation once more going in the direction he wanted.

Vlur fiddles with his translator wondering if he should shut it off since it did not seem to be working properly. The human was saying things that simply made no sense to him. "For many cycles the Pak'ma'ra have decided not to expand, it is unnecessary."

"Aren't you angry about what they did to you during their occupation of your world?" he asks, the smile once again fading.

Vlur replies "They no longer occupy our world and we have resumed our tasks. Their ideas were strange and have been discussed. We did not understand them and they did not understand us but we understand them more now."

"I'm not talking about the other Pak'ma'ra, I'm talking about you. Aren't you angry about it?"

Vlur blinks again. Then understanding came over Vlur's face and he nodded. "Pak'ma'ra, all the same, all different," he says as if it would make all the sense in the world to the human.

"What?" the human asks, a little confused.

"Your ideas are strange, we will discuss them." Vlur stands and herds the human back out of his room. "Thank you."

Speaking more quickly the man says "As you wish, Ambassador. Let me know when there is anything we can do for you," with a smile.

The Pak'ma'ra Ambassador bows and quickly closes the door. Tossing his translator back in the drawer he wonders if he will ever understand humans.

It's the quiet ones who will change the universe...

They Have Great Fashion Sense.

COMMENT:

By Todd Boyce

WHY DO I like the Pak'ma'ra? Quite a few reasons, actually. They are most definitely my favorite race in the show for one. I guess it's because they are misunderstood and shunned, which generates not only sympathy for them but also burning curiosity about their culture and their place in the Babylon 5 universe. How did they become a significant power in the galaxy? Who knows, but it certainly adds to their mystery.

This is more of a professional reason, but I also like the creature design. They are one of the few races that don't simply look like a human with a funny hairdo or a prosthetic chin. They really do seem like they could be truly alien. For this same reason I liked the Vorlons (before we knew what they looked like), and N'Grath's race as well.

In Babylon 5 Wars, these preferences from the show have certainly influenced my desire to play them. But it's not just the Pak'ma'ra in the show that influenced my desire to play their ships. In the first episode when the Narns invade Raghesh III, the first capital ship we see in the show is a T'loth, and I loved it at first sight. It's not a great ship by any stretch of the imagination in the game but yes, when I played the Narns, you can bet at least one of those ships was in my fleet. But that's not all, we all know the T'loth's heavy weaponry is none other than PLASMA! I gained a little bit of experience using the plasma weapons on that ship and learned very quickly at how effective they are at destroying ships. Being a fan of Japanese culture, I like the idea of the dramatic "throw all your energy into the final killing blow attack", and what better weapon is there than plasma to do this sort of thing?

That's right, none.

When I learned that the Pak'ma'ra were completely plasma, I knew they were the race I wanted to play. When the Pshul'shi appeared as AOG's ship of the month, I was ecstatic. It had the big huge killing blow weapon (then known as the Fuser Torpedo), heavy rockem' sockem' capital ship killing Mega Plasmas, and just oozed plasma out of every bulkhead in every direction. It also had great thrusters, great amount of thrust, and amazingly, 4 retro thrusters! For plasma lovers, this was a dream come true. Good acceleration and deceleration means you can get close to

your enemy very rapidly without overshooting and rain fiery death upon them.

League-1 then came along and the rest of the Pak ships did not disappoint me (except for one and I won't get into that right now). A full fleet could be taken now and it was beautiful. Powerful ships loaded with plasma unleashing death and destruction. The Pak'ma'ra could destroy ships faster than any other race I had ever played. There was

just one problem to overcome...

I generally have terrible luck, no, I really mean TERRIBLE luck. When random chance (and more-so money) is involved, it invariably goes against me. And it is subtle, in ways that are difficult to describe but I have documented it on several occasions. My friends have even dubbed it "Todd Luck."

What's interesting is that when I use the Pak, my luck generally changes to being pretty good. What's this?

Another bonus to playing the Pak? Yep, for me this was the cincher. I can't

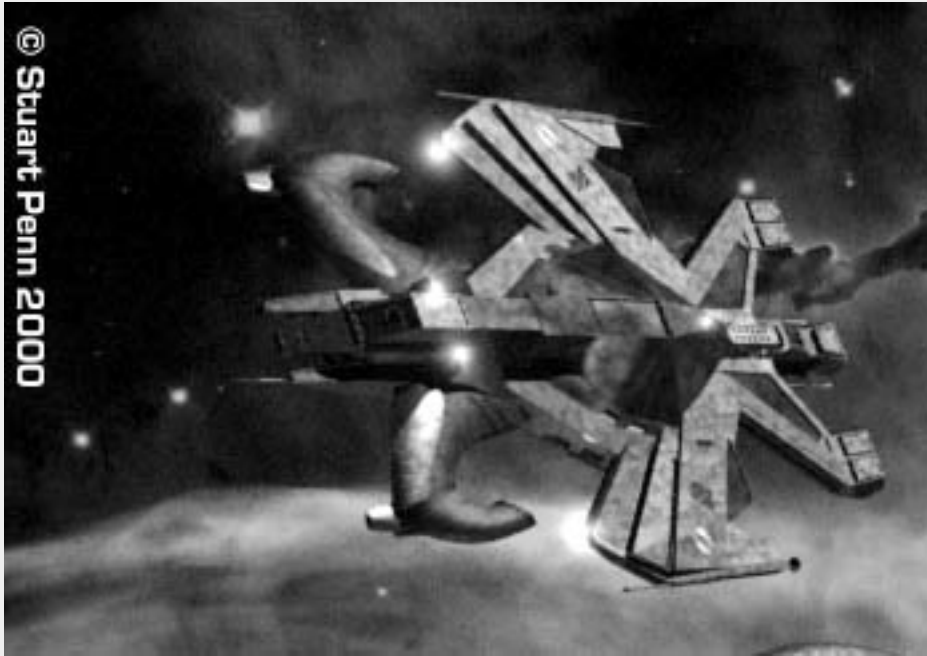
explain it but I'm not going to complain.

In the end, you can have your long range sniping weapons. You can have your bathtubs of doom and your wussy ballistics. That's right, I want tactics that involve more than sitting back and wagging the nose of my ships back and forth. I want to get close and personal, to get into that furball and see the glow on your face as huge balls of fire engulf your ships, and then to emerge victorious demonstrating that the Pak'ma'ra you are so fond of making jokes about are not to be trifled with (and that they have great fashion sense too).

How do I win with them? Well, check out all of my other articles for that. They can be found in possibly this and other issues of Babcom and also AOG's Tactics Guide. More will be available in future issues as well.



Building balance into the Pak'ma'ra battlefleet



Pak'ma'ra Strategy and Tactics: Working With Restricted Deployment By TODD BOYCE

IN A campaign setting where a player is working with tens of thousands of points worth of ships, the Pak'ma'ra may seem limited when selecting a fleet. Aside from OSATs, fighters and bases, the Pak only have five ships that have no deployment restrictions; the Resh'kas'u, Sim'sall'e, Urik'hal, Tra'shu'li and Sho'bog'na. Every other ship is limited, in some cases severely. Here are some guidelines that may assist in creating a competitive force.

The Resh'kas'u, Urik'hal, Tra'shu'li will likely form the backbone of any campaign fleet since they are all good ships and they have no deployment restrictions. The Sho'bog'na might also be used but rarely due to its fragility. Also their variants are only uncommon, so it is not a burden to fulfill the requirements to acquire them. The Sashul'kur and Urik'tal are more specialized, and it would probably be detrimental to stock up too heavily on these two variants. One that may be difficult to field in numbers is the Ar'tees as it is one of the best variants available for the Pak'ma'ra. The Pa'da'shar is another option but it was just recently published and there is very little data on its performance (though by the looks of it, it will be a good ship, particularly for assault missions).

The Sim'sall'e on the other hand is a very old design well surpassed in capability by nearly every other ship in the Pak'ma'ra fleet. Being an old design, it seems odd that there are no common or uncommon variants and/or upgraded versions available of this ship. Depending on the complexity of the campaign rules this ship could be useful in

transporting cargo, but more likely, it will be used as a throw-away minesweeper (by charging it right through a minefield, detonating and/or activating the mines and clearing a path for the more valuable and expensive ships). There are only two variants available, and both are rare, the Sim'tor'ka and the Pla'sall'e.

The Sim'tor'ka, being ELINT, is often a fairly important ship in a campaign. The problem is that if more than one is desired in the fleet, 8 Sim'sall'e (3200 points worth) must also be purchased. Already its usefulness is rapidly diminishing and the absolute necessity of them is really gauged by the campaign rules. Basically, take as few as possible, keeping the number of Sim'sall'e in the fleet to a minimum.

But that's not all, what's worse is if a Pla'sall'e is also desired? The same 8 Sim'sall'e requirement exists, AND it is in place of taking a Sim'tor'ka. Are these units really worth the required expenditure on a mediocre hull? Probably not, and therefore it will likely see little use in a campaign.

The Thar'not'ak is one of the few Pak'ma'ra ships that has a 10% deployment restriction. This is really too bad since it is such an excellent ship and at 775 points each, there will only be a few in any campaign. In this ship's case, take every one that is allowed. They are very valuable to any fleet, and it will not be possible to overload on them.

Though the Pshul'shi has a 33% restriction, it is not necessarily a good idea to maximize this amount. While it is a nice ship, a balanced fleet is more important than one that is top heavy. In general, these ships need to fly with at least one or two other cruisers, and at least three smaller escorts and fighters as well. When calculating the

points, it is best to think about how the fleet will be divided up into smaller forces and structure each one accordingly.

An example of extremely limited deployment is the Pshul'tau which is a rare variant of the Pshul'shi, which also has a 33% deployment restriction. That means that one needs to have around a 24,000 point fleet in order to have a second Pshul'tau when all the limitations and requirements are taken into account. Because of this, the Pshul'tau is really not rare, it is ultra-rare and practically unique. In most campaigns, there will likely be only one of these ships present so to speed up the calculations, buy one and move on, and only consider a second one once the decision to purchase the 8th Pshul'shi is made.

In general, a well rounded campaign fleet will likely have these approximate percentages:

20%	Dreadnoughts: Pshul'shi
10%	Heavy Cruisers: Thar'not'ak
35%	Line Ships+fighters: Resh'kas'u, Sim'sall'e (as few as possible), Ar'tees and Por'fa'tis
10%	Ultra-Rare Units: Sim'tor'ka, Pshul'tau, Pla'sall'e
20%	Escorts: Urik'hal, Tra'shu'li, Urik'tal, Pa'da'shar
5%	Fixed Defenses (Ursh'tal'u Bases, Thor'ka OSATs, Colt'u/Colt'i/Pal'fa/Ti'lor Mines)

These percentages will maximize the best units the Pak'ma'ra have, and can be broken up into very balanced and potent fleets.

Playing with plasma streams

Pak'ma'ra Strategy and Tactics:
The Dual Plasma Stream
By TODD BOYCE

SOME people love the Dual Plasma Stream (DPS) for its rapid firing and armor reducing abilities. Others hate it, and see the weapon as ineffective and a waste of space compared to other heavy weapons. How truly effective is a DPS? I believe it is very effective and here's why;

The DPS uses 10 power. For the Urik'hal, this is a great number. It provides one more sensor point, an additional thrust point, and an additional point to be applied to the Plasma Web, leaving the power surplus to add yet another thrust point. There would have to be two Heavy Plasma Cannons mounted in its place to generate that much power, an unlikely prospect. Since the weapon has a 1 per 2 turn recharge, it can be brought back online quickly. This already is an advantage of mounting the weapon on this hull. Since no plasma weapon that can be mounted on that hull can provide that much power, this is one advantage it has over all other heavy plasma weapons that could be mounted in its place. It could be argued that a weapon with a lower power requirement would generate a surplus of energy, but that would be unlikely to be kept if Agents of Gaming actually made the variant. Besides, it would still have the advantage of being able to charge the DPS back up in a shorter amount of time than any other comparable weapon.

Already mentioned was the 1 per 2 turn recharge rate. This rate is faster than any other plasma weapon the Pak'ma'ra currently have on their ships (with exception to the Plasma Accelerator which after 2 turns isn't fully

charged). This is a boon to Pak'ma'ra players because of the effect it has on the firing order of weapons. Here's a typical firing cycle:

Turn 1: DPS, HPI, HPI, MPI
Turn 2: MPI
Turn 3: DPS
Turn 4: HPI, HPI, MPI
Turn 5: MPI, DPS
Turn 6: No Weapon Fire

DPS: Dual Plasma Stream, HPI: Heavy Plasma Cannon, MPI: Medium Plasma Cannon

As can be seen, only on turn 6 does the Urik'hal not have a weapon available to fire. Some people dislike the disjointed firing rate, but I think it keeps the ship more tenacious by not giving the enemy a chance to escape from continued attack., Mounted on as maneuverable of a hull as the Urik'hal ensures that it will be able to bring whatever weapon is ready to bear on a target. While this may not be an advantage mounted on a larger hull, it definitely makes the weapon more effective mounted on the Urik'hal.

The armor reduction ability is probably the biggest bone of contention surrounding the DPS. Some people dislike weapons that make other weapons more effective (why not just do more direct damage instead after all?). Others don't like the fact that armor is factored into every 5 point rake, thereby reducing the overall damage significantly and spreading it around to the various systems.

While it is true that the damage is significantly reduced, on average it will still do close to the same number of boxes of damage as a typical Heavy Plasma due to its enormous 6d10+8 damage. The only difference is that the damage

is spread all over the facing side and not in one lump as most plasma weapons work. This has the bonus of generating numerous criticals. Is it better than a standard mode hit? The question of whether raking mode weapons are better than standard mode weapons comes to mind and that is typically a heated debate. Considering it does about the same amount of damage overall, and barring personal preference, it could appear that it makes little difference which is mounted on the ship when looking at the straight damage...

...UNTIL the armor reduction ability is taken into account. The DPS usually generates 7-8 5 point armor reducing rakes. Weapons that follow up the DPS are now more effective because of the reduction in armor. When the damage savings is taken into account, the number of boxes the DPS has had a hand in destroying goes up dramatically.

In conclusion, the advantages of the DPS over another heavy weapon such as the Heavy Plasma Cannon are:

- High power availability when shut off
- Fast recharge rate
- Well conceived and very appropriate placement on the Urik'hal hull
- Comparable overall damage to other heavy plasma weapons
- Degrades enemy ship performance in ways all other Pak weapons can not
- Armor reduction making other weapons fired more effective

It is all these aspects together that makes the Dual Plasma Stream a truly effective and viable weapon system for the Pak'ma'ra.

Abbai angst

Peeling back their defences



*Tactical
Display*

By AARON HARTWELL

THE ABBAI are a painstaking race to play against. They are masters of defense, with little offensive punch of their own. Games involving them can be a long, and tedious, experience. When opposing players look at Abbai ships, they are often quick to judge them as inferior to their own. Nothing could be further from the truth.

The Matriarchy's ships, when piloted by an experienced player, can often pick your ships apart, doing little real damage to them, but totally incapacitating them. This article deals with how to take away the Abbai's major advantages, and how to swing battles into your favor, no matter what race you play.

Perhaps the most important piece of machinery on an Abbai ship is its impeters. However, the active ability of this defensive wonder is a once per turn ability. This means its capabilities can easily be overloaded. Whatever an EW loaded impeter decides to shoot down is likely to miss, so you should always count your first "big" shot each turn as wasted. The solution to this problem is to ensure that when you fire at an Abbai ship you fire many such "big" weapons at the same time; concentrating your fire allows you to overwhelm the Abbai's defenses, making them significantly more vulnerable to incoming fire than if only a single shot was fired. While the Abbai's impeters can intercept Laser weapons, this class of weapons is by far the most effective weapon against the Matriarch's ships, assuming they are used in sufficient numbers. The high damage potential of Lasers, combined with the relative ineffectiveness of shields against them, and their inability to be intercepted by the Abbai's secondary weapon, the quad array, make them ideal. In raking mode they can quickly remove an Abbai ship's defensive systems (shields and impeters), while also reducing their already limited offensive capabilities by destroying the limited number of weapons found on Abbai hulls. In addition, Laser weapons are among the most effective weapons to use against shield-equipped vessels, as their high damage yields tend to be less affected by the damage reduction imposed by the Abbai's gravitic shields.

Perhaps the easiest way to deal with Abbai defenses is to avoid them completely. Both Impeters and gravitic shields have arcs in which they function, by paying close attention



to how each Abbai ship powers its impeters, and which shields the Abbai player activates, you can easily take advantage of him; winning a game against the Abbai is often simply a matter of paying close attention to his power, and EW, allocation, and countering by moving your ships into an advantageous position.

All Abbai ships employ gravitic shields, and all of these ships have "holes" in their shield walls. In addition, many Abbai players power only one of their Impeters with EW during any given turn. These actions create voids in the defenses of the Matriarchy's ships, where they are both shieldless and devoid of active impeters. This extreme weakness can be exploited by employing fast moving (preferably high initiative, and agile) ships that can attack the Abbai fleet at its weakest points. Such ships are also incredibly helpful when engaging the Abbai's own medium ship, the Tiraca, a ship that can often cause havoc if allowed to fly around unchecked.

Many opponents worry about using medi-

um ships due to their fragility when facing the Abbai's secondary weapon, the Quad Array. This problem can be solved in one of two ways

- 1) Taking medium ships with longer range weapons, to keep Quad Arrays at distance (-1/hex, or preferably -1/2 hex weapons).

- 2) Forcing the Abbai player to engage you with 4 shots from his Quad Array each turn. If he refuses to do this, you limit the effectiveness of his weapon. If he chooses to fire 4 shots each turn he is likely to take criticals and make his weapons less effective.

In summary, there are two ways to make games against the Abbai go more quickly, and turn in your favor. The first is to concentrate your heavy fire from several vessels, overloading the Abbai ships defenses and destroying them one at a time. Secondly, use medium ships, or any ship that wins initiative in a turn, to exploit the defensive decisions that the Abbai player has made. All races can employ at least one of these tactics, and most races can use both of these tactics simultaneously.



Brakiri Pri-wakat Astarta Cruiser

The Astarta is the largest of the Pri-wakat ships, and can land a full division of troops on a planet. Designed to be atmosphere capable to allow the ship to deploy its troops without worrying about sending assault shuttles to form a beach head, the ship was built in small numbers by Pri-wakat shortly before the Dilgar war. Like the other Pri-wakat hulls that were built on the surface, its production was stepped up during the war when the Brakiri orbital yards had been destroyed by the Dilgar. The design was adjusted during this period, and sacrificed its troop carrying capability for additional weapons and shield power.

This has led to two variants of the ship being in service at the same time, and Pri-wakat kept the combat variant in service after the Dilgar war, converting more troop carrying Astartas to combat variants during the league and Shadow wars.

The Astarta remains the closest thing Pri-wakat have produced to a dedicated warship, and their only jump drive capable ship.

(The SCSs for this ship can be found in the Attachments folder)

Trek 'Nemesis' release date set?

IT WAS mentioned as an afterthought, almost as if it was already common knowledge, but it appears fans finally know when they can expect "Star Trek: Nemesis" to make its debut.

In an interview with LeVar Burton (Lt. Cmdr. Geordi La Forge), the Chicago Sun-Times said that the 10th Star Trek feature will hit theaters Nov. 22. The newspaper confirmed the cast of the movie includes Steven Culp as Cmdr. Madden, Tom Hardy as Shinzon, Dina Meyer as Romulan Cmdr. Donatra, as well as Ron Perlman as the Romulan Viceroy. It also confirmed cameo appearances by the widow of "Star Trek" creator Gene Roddenberry, Majel Barrett (Lwaxana Troi), Whoopi Goldberg (Guinan) and Kate Mulgrew (Capt. Kathryn Janeway, ("Voyager").

- www.sfyportal.com

ELINT: the nasty spanner in the works

ELINT in tournaments:
By AARON HARTWELL

IT HAS often been said that taking an ELINT ship in a tournament fleet is an unwise decision; the large number of points that ELINT ships cost, in relation to the small size of the fleet, means that they rarely pay for themselves when used in such a situation. More often than not it would be more efficient to take a hull that bolsters the fleets direct firepower, rather than taking a ship that boosts the fleets capabilities through ELINT. For the most part I would agree that, with the exception of a few ships, such as the Dargan, ELINT ships have a hard time showing their true value in a 3500-point setting. A recent discussion on the B5-wars forum has contradicted this idea however, and has presented a number of viable ELINT uses in a small tournament fleet. This article will attempt to detail a few of these.

Before going through possible ELINT tactics, it is important to note that this article applies to vessels that are of relatively low-cost. This in turn means they will have a relatively low sensor rating in comparison to many other ELINT ships. This fact makes them poor ELINT vessels in the minds of many, but their low cost can make them valuable additions to a small fleet. The tactics are applicable to more powerful ELINT ships as well, but their high costs usually prevents them from being cost effective in tournament sized fleets.

TACTICS:

1) Disruption of Offensive EW

Often overlooked, disruption ELINT can be a very cost effective tactic when used at the appropriate moment. By eliminating your opponents low OEW locks, you force him to make shots at double the normal range penalty. Doing this can often be far more beneficial than loaning DEW or using blanket protection.

2) Disruption of CCEW

Having problems getting those fighters in for a shot without having them destroyed? The use of disruption ELINT can remove your opponents CCEW, making him vulnerable to your fighter attacks. In most cases players only invest 1 or 2 points in CCEW, and this is easily overcome. Eliminating CCEW causes range penalties to be doubled if your opponent attempts to fire at your fighters. Keeping your squadrons at 3 to 4 hexes from their target can make it virtually impossible for many anti-fighter

weapons to score hits on your flights.

3) Disruption of ELINT

Didn't think you could do this? Well it can't be done directly, but you can get sneaky. Next time your opponent locks onto one of his own ships and attempts to loan offensive ELINT, use your disruptive ELINT to negate the lock on his own ship. By spending 3 points of EW you can effectively counter your opponent's ability to loan offensive EW. Therefore low-cost ELINT ships can counter their much higher cost counterparts on the opposing side.

4) Point Defense

Most low-cost ELINT vessels are capital ships with jump drive, allowing you to fulfill your tourney requirements. In addition, these ships are almost always armed with point-blank anti-fighter weaponry. Through the use of blanket protection, and close range fire, the low-cost ELINT ship can prove an effective defensive unit, freeing up your other ships for more important tasks.

5) Bodyguard

Have a ship you really want to survive? Have your low-cost ELINT ship remain by its side, providing anti-fighter support, and loaning defensive EW to the important ship. In this way you force your opponent to attack your ELINT ship, and eliminate it before he can mount an assault on your more important vessel.

6) Bodyguard 2

As above, but rather than loaning defensive EW every turn, only loan the important ship defensive on turns that it fires. While the important ship recharges its weapons both it and the bodyguard should turtle.

7) Unique Weapons

Several low-cost ELINT hulls carry weapons that are not readily available on other hulls. To use these weapons you have to buy ELINT ships. Often these weapons can make the ELINT vessel worth taking. (Eg. Abbai Shyarie, Cascor Coqari, Kor-Lyan Leklant)

Although this article lists ways of using ELINT that may boost the capabilities of low-cost ELINT ships, players shouldn't ignore the more commonly used forms of ELINT (Blanket protection, and the loaning of OEW), as these are still viable uses. Even for ELINT vessels with low sensors.

The ideas in this article were largely gathered from a discussion on the Bab5-wars forum. I thank all those involved in their sharing their ideas.



Downsizing the Drazi and Pak'ma'ra

Scott McGaffin covers some of the principle tactics and key points for fighting against two of the Brakiri's League 'allies', the Pak'ma'ra and the Drazi. This is by no means all there is to know, it is just a guide to aid you in defeating the Syndicracies enemies.

BRAKIRI vs. PAK'MA'RA

THE KEY point to beating the Pak'ma'ra comes down to one phrase: 'range is life'. Look at Pak'ma'ra weapons: plasma cannons, plasma accelerators, plasma streams, plasma webs and the powerful fuser. All but the fuser are essentially close range weapons. Sure the others (with the exception of the plasma web) can be fired at medium ranges (10 to 20 hexes), but why bother? The range penalties at 20 hexes vary from -10 for the mega plasma cannon, down to -20 for the medium plasma cannon and plasma accelerator. Not only do they have a hefty range penalty, but the weapon effectiveness drops the further it's fired from the target.

The exception of course is the fuser and ranged fuser. Both weapons are capable of being fired at long ranges and both are capable of inflicting massive amounts of damage. But this

is offset by a long recharge time (5 turns), the fact that the fuser is only available on the dreadnought, and that the ranged fuser exists only on the starbase. When faced with the dreadnought, consider firing one or two weapons at the front of the ship to either destroy or damage the fuser. Even light damage can cause the fuser's range penalty to get worse (which further heightens the Brakiri range advantage).

Now take a look at Brakiri weapons. The graviton beam, gravitic lance, grav cannon and heavy laser are all long-range weapons. All of them with the exception of the gravitic lance fire faster than the fuser and ranged fuser (the gravitic lance equals the two Pak'ma'ra weapons when you consider the cool down time when fired sustained). For medium range the Brakiri use medium lasers and gravitic cutters. This is pretty much the range where the Pak'ma'ra might start to fire (unless they're really pushing their

luck). The graviton pulsar is really the Brakiri's only real decent close in weapon, and when compared to the Pak'ma'ra's large close-in arsenal it is sorely lacking.

So from the two sides' armaments, it can easily be seen that the Brakiri are a long-range race and the Pak'ma'ra are a close range race. Remember this and keep the range open! It's also worth noting that the Pak'ma'ra's only decent interception weapon intercepts all weapons fire from a single hex (even lasers).

Something also to note is the general location of Pak'ma'ra weapons as they're laid out on their vessels. The Pshul'shi dreadnought, Resh'kas'u light carrier (and variant), Sim'sall'e transport cruiser (and variants) tend to have the vast majority of their weapons located on the sides. Aim for the sides and not the fronts to de-tooth them.

To aid in the above, use the superior Brakiri

maneuverability. Besides the gravitic drive, Brakiri ships tend to have much shorter turn delays. Chances are the Pak'ma'ra player is going to move in quick to cut down on your long-range superiority duration. This of course will result in his units having long turn delays. Take advantage of this. Stay in his damaged arcs and outside of his gun arcs.

Another advantage to make use of is superior Brakiri EW. The advantage varies but is about 1 or 2 points per vessel.

One of the other key points to beating the Pak'ma'ra is through the use of fighters. The Pak'ma'ra have only three types of carriers, with their largest one only carrying two squadrons of fighters and it's a rare, limited availability variant. Compare that to the Brakiri who possess over a half dozen different designs, from the small one squadron Brikorta light carrier, up to the massive Lykorai supercarrier able to field five squadrons of fighters.

The Pak'ma'ra only have one type of fighter to use for both interceptor and anti-warship work. On the other hand the Brakiri have a dedicated interceptor and a dedicated ship-killer. This is not to say that the Por'fa'tis is garbage. On the contrary, due to the nature of plasma weaponry their fighters can be quite potent at damaging ships. But remember that because their weapons are plasma based, they'll want to get to point-blank range to inflict maximum damage. It's a good idea to take at least one squadron of Falkosi to deal with the Pak'ma'ra fighters, and as the Falkosi is a superior interceptor this should be sufficient to at the very least keep the Pak'ma'ra fighters occupied. Graviton pulsars should be able to easily deal with any fighters that do get by the interceptors.

That leaves the Pikitos heavy fighter. The Pikitos is easily able to destroy Pak'ma'ra ships. This is mainly due to the fact that Pak'ma'ra armor isn't that high. Also note that the rear of every single Pak'ma'ra capital ship has weaker armor than the front and sides (from one to two points less). Race in; fire your light graviton beam, then race out and recharge. Do not linger about! The only thing the Pikitos has to worry about is the Por'fa'tis (which your Falkosi should be dealing with) and the plasma web. Staying four or more hexes away from a plasma-web equipped ship will render the web incapable of damaging your fighters (although it can be used to intercept the Pikitos' fire). If you have to get closer than four hexes, you'll only need to worry about being hit once as plasma web stacking is not allowed. Due to the armor and structure of the Pikitos, chances are you won't lose more than one fighter to dropout (if at all).

To sum up tactics to use to combat the Pak'ma'ra:

1. Fight at long range.
2. Know where to hit the Pak'ma'ra ships (front, sides or aft).
3. Use your superior maneuverability.
4. Use your superior EW.

5. Take advantage of superior Brakiri fighter strength.

PAK'MA'RA SHIPS

Here are some notes about specific Pak'ma'ra units.

Pshul'shi Dreadnought- The most powerful Pak'ma'ra units. Kill at long range at all costs. Its firepower at point blank range is large. Fire at the sides only to rake off the plasma cannons. This will seriously dent the Pshul'shi's firepower. Destroying the plasma batteries on the front will cause the Pak'ma'ra player to shut off weapons/equipment if he wants to use the plasma web in anti-fighter mode. Send fighters to attack the rear, as the structure armor is noticeably poorer.

Thar'not'ak Plasma Cruiser- The exact same applies to this ship as the Pshul'shi. Kill at long range at all costs. Although it is sufficient to tear off the front and rake off the two side plasma cannons to render this ship almost toothless (don't forget the rear plasma cannon). Like the Pshul'shi, send fighters to attack the rear (unless the front has been removed or is nearly removed).

Urik'hal Fast Destroyer- The Pak'ma'ra's fast attack unit. Usually operated in wolfpacks. These units are very fast and maneuverable and will be able to exploit weak points in your battleline. Consider sending your Pikitos and Haltonas after them, as they'll be able to easily keep up. Be careful of the Urik'tal Fast Escort variant getting the jump on your fighters as it has five plasma webs and lots of power to use them.

Pla'sall'e Wave Cruiser- This is the Pak'ma'ra's only real dedicated long range ship. Its plasma waves, even though they have a slow rate of fire, can be quite annoying. Rake off the plasma waves (or use fighters) then leave it alone.

BRAKIRI vs. DRAZI

The principles needed to beat the Pak'ma'ra, can easily be applied for use against the Drazis. Like the Pak'ma'ra, the Drazis have very few long-range weapons. In fact there are only two vessels able to really fight the Brakiri at long range: the Darkhawk Missile Cruiser and the Preyhawk Battlecruiser. One uses missiles, and the other uses captured Dilgar technology. So for fighting the Drazis, as with the Pak'ma'ra, the best plan is to stay at long range (if possible). Countering the Darkhawk is easier than countering the Preyhawk. The Brakiri's main small weapon, the graviton pulsar, has a poor interception rating. But against ballistic weapons it has no degradation, hence it can stack up with other pulsars to degrade the chances of the Darkhawk's missiles hitting.

Where the Drazis are best, is in the medium to close range category. Though their weapons are individually not as powerful as the Pak'ma'ra's plasma arsenal, what their weapons do have is a considerably faster rate of fire. Most of the heavier weapons such as the particle cannon and particle blaster have two-turn recharge rates. Considerably better than the three-turn heavy plasma cannon and four-turn mega plasma cannon. Once the Drazis reach medium range (about 10-20 hexes), they are going to rapidly be able to out hit you. Concentrate firepower on their bigger, more weapon laden ships. With the exception of maybe the Stormfalcon Heavy Cruiser, their ships individually do not have huge amounts of firepower.

The Drazis, because of their ship costs, are going to outnumber you. This is unavoidable. Chances are they'll outnumber you by a fair margin. Which is why eliminating a single ship doesn't necessarily cause a Drazis fleet grievous harm. If range can be maintained, rake the larger weapons off of the Drazis ships. Then move to a different target. Don't completely obliterate a ship and then move on, just de-tooth them and move on. Also due to the nature of the way Drazis hit locations are set up, you're going to be destroying/damaging a lot of side thrusters, which is really quite important as this will reduce their ships' maneuverability.

At close range you're going to be outclassed by numerically superior firepower. Some of the Drazis weapons can be quite damaging at close range, such as the particle repeater. If you're going to be staying at close range, tear off these weapons as soon as possible, as they can easily be the most lethal Drazis close-in weapons. To cut down on the heavy Drazis barrage, move into their rear arcs, as almost every Drazis ship has no rear firing weapons.

In the case of fighting the Drazis, you're going to be outmaneuvered. Even with gravitic drive, they're going to outdo you. This is mainly due to the fact that the bulk of the Brakiri fleet are capital ships, and the bulk of the Drazis fleet are heavy combat vessels. Keep your fleet together; don't let ships get picked off. As noted above, because of their layouts, Drazis ships are going to have a lot of side thruster hits. This is going to make it harder for them to turn. Exploit this! Use it to increase the range.

One of the key Brakiri advantages fighting the Pak'ma'ra is fighters; against the Drazis this superiority still exists to a certain degree. The Drazis have less than half a dozen carriers with the biggest being able to bring no more than a single squadron of light fighters and three super heavy fighters. The Star Snake is an interceptor just like the Falkosi, and is pretty feeble when attacking ships. When facing a smaller Drazis force a single flight of Falkosis teemed with a Halik should easily be able to deal with any Star Snake threat. The real Drazis fighter threat is from the Sky Serpent Heavy Assault Fighters. These fighters are some of the best ship killers in

the game. Because of their firepower and maneuverability, they can capitalize on any weakness in your battleline. These should be prime targets for your Falkosis and Haliks and should be destroyed as soon as possible. Also hit carriers before they launch their own fighters, especially assault fighter carriers.

Unlike fighting the Pak'ma'ra, your fighters are going to take a pounding when attacking Drazi ships. Some of their ships like the Guardhawk Battle Escort and War Talon Escort Carrier will be able to mow your fighters down easily, except if you're in their rear arcs where they are weaponless. Beware when attacking the Stormfalcon and it's heavy carrier variant as they have twin arrays that can fire into the rear! When attacking with your Pikitos, be very aware of ships using CCEW. Pick on ships on the fringes of the Drazi fleet, do not dive into the middle of their fleet unless your like dying quick. Race in, fire and get out quickly!

To sum up tactics to use to combat the Drazi:

1. Fight at long range.
2. Rake off weapons and move on. Target destruction isn't necessary.
3. Use your fighters very intelligently, pick off easy targets.

DRAZI SHIPS

Here are some notes about specific Drazi units.

Preyhawk Battlecruiser- Probably the best Drazi long-range vessel. Pick it off at range as the heavy bolter can be quite damaging. Be wary of the scatter pulsar when sending fighters to deal with it. Remember the unarmed rear arc.

Guardhawk Battle Escort- Close in ship only. Not only will it mow fighters like grass, it'll do quite a number on ships. Hit it at medium range when it can't easily reply. Keep fighters well away from this ship unless you know for a fact they can sit in its rear.

Nightfalcon Heavy Carrier- The best Drazi carrier. If at all possible hit the front on turn one, destroying the two forward catapults will really annoy the Drazi player if they're carrying fighters.

Solarhawk Battlecruiser- Beware of the solar cannon as its damage is quite powerful and can easily chew through the relatively small Brakiri structure blocks. This ship has very poor fighter defenses. Hitting it with a squadron of Pikitos should be sufficient to put it out of commission.

Stormfalcon Heavy Cruiser- The biggest, most powerful Drazi ship in operation. Hit it at long range when it can't really respond. Beware of sending fighters against it.

Deploying the Brakiri in Fleet Action

Fleet Lists by Corporation
By ALEX ROBERTS

ONE OF the more interesting facets of the Brakiri is the fact that their fleets are not under the command of one unified, governmental institution, but rather that Brakiri fleets are purchased and staffed at the behest of the various Brakiri mega-corporations. Each corporation has their own fleet development programs, and as such the ships and fighters used vary widely from corporation to corporation.

It is relatively rare for ships of different corporations to work with one another towards a common goal, though emergencies such as the Dilgar invasion and the war against the Shadows are noted exceptions. The optional use fleet lists below are intended to assist Fleet Action players in building fleets that are specific to a particular corporation, rather than a hodgepodge of various corporate ships as indicated in OAAG. (Note that FA versions of Brakiri ships listed below will be available shortly). Background on the corporations themselves can be found in OAAG.

Ak-Habil Conglomerate:

Antoph Light Cruiser - Common
Avioki Cruiser- Common
Brathon Auxiliary Cruiser - Common
Calorta Elint Ship - Uncommon
Corumai Dreadnought - Rare
Halik Fighter-Killer - Common
Halos Heavy Scout - Rare
Haltona Frigate - Rare
Kabrik Police Ship - Common
Kaliva Lance Cruiser - Rare
Rakarta Patrol Frigate - Common

Ly-Nakir Industries:

Bashnar Auxiliary Carrier - Uncommon
Brikorta Light Carrier - Uncommon
Brokados Battle Carrier - Common
Calorta Elint Ship - Uncommon
Cidikar Heavy Carrier - Rare
Devaskar Carrier - Common
Lykorai Supercarrier - Unique (Rare for points purposes, only one allowed)
Rakarta Patrol Frigate - Common
Torsha Scout Carrier - Rare

Pri-Wakat Concepts & Solutions:

Brathon Auxiliary Cruiser - Common
Calorta Elint Ship - Uncommon
Drikorta Power Cruiser - Uncommon
Ikorta Assault Cruiser - Common
Rakarta Patrol Frigate - Common
Tokrana Orbital Satellite- Special/Common

Im-Resha Technologies:

(The rarities below apply to Im-Resha only

fleets. In multi-corporation fleets increase the rarity levels by one each. I.e. common becomes uncommon.)

Calorta Elint Ship - Uncommon
Shakara Scout Cruiser - Uncommon
Takata Mine Cruiser - Uncommon
Tashkat Advanced Cruiser - Common
Ishtaka Techbase - Special/Common
Rakarta Patrol Frigate - Common
Tashkava Advanced Lance Cruiser - Rare

Kam-Lassit:

Bashnar Auxiliary Carrier - Uncommon
Brathon Auxiliary Cruiser - Common
Calorta Elint Ship - Uncommon
Rakarta Patrol Frigate - Common

Tor-Sikar LogTech:

As this is a very small corporation, these ships may only be used in multi-corporation fleets per the rules below .
Batrado Armored Transport - Uncommon (Rare 2238-2261)

Multi-Corporation Fleets:

Although Brakiri corporations generally work alone, the rules below are given to allow for multi-corporation fleets. These fleets generally only come together for national emergencies, however.

When fielding a multi-corporation fleet, the following percentages per corporation must be followed. Each corporation is allowed to have one ship that exceeds the percentage. For example, in a 5000 point game, Ak-Habil ships may consist of 1750 points. Thus, the player may purchase 4 Avioki at 455 points each. Although this totals 1820, this is acceptable. The same player may not purchase 5 Avioki. Fighter points are included in the percentages. Standard rarity rules must be followed, and count against the total points allotted to the player, not against the corporation's individual points.

In the interest of cooperation in the face of a great threat (which is the only thing that will bring the corporations together), squadrons may be built freely per the rules in Fleet Action, and may consist of ships from multiple corporations.

Ak-Habil:	35%
Ly-Nakir:	30%
Pri-Wakat:	20%
Im-Resha:	10%
Others:	5%

(Note that some of these ships are not available yet for FA. They should be out soon however.)

Errata for "All that Glitters is not Gold"

December 2001 BattleForce
Scenario

The Scanning Procedure table was printed from an earlier draft. Here is the actual table:

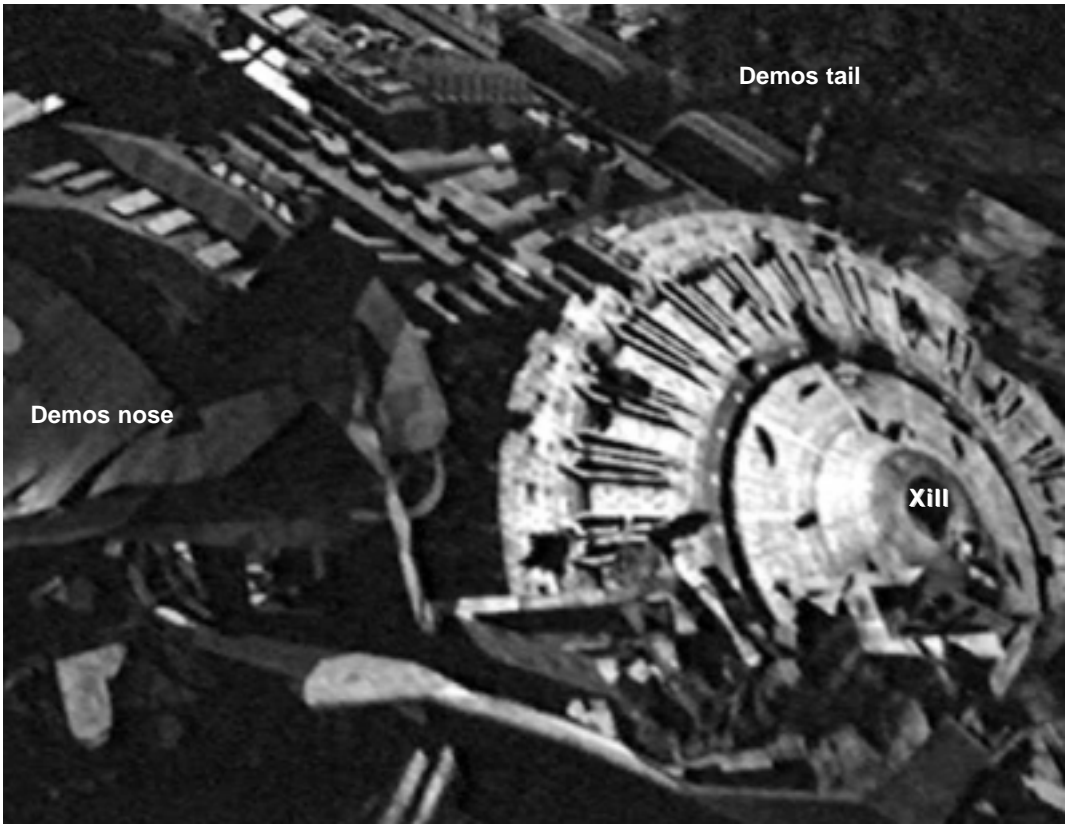
Roll	Result
2-14	Nothing is found
15-19	1d6* Artifacts
20-24	2d6* Artifacts
25+	3d6** Artifacts

* - Each '6' rolled indicates that instead of artifacts, the searcher has been discovered by a booby-trap: a Captor Mine of Signature 6, Armor 4, Structure 8, firing as a Medium Phasing Pulse Cannon.

** - Each '6' rolled indicates a mine, as above. Worse, a flight of 3 Shadow fighters, under drone controls, have noticed the intrusion and awakened. They appear in the scanned hex at speed zero at the start of the next turn. Each turn, they will attack whichever target requires the least thrust expenditure to get to within a range of zero. (If multiple ships are equally hard to get to, choose randomly.)

Each Artifact counts as one Cargo Point for transportation and storage. Loading cargo aboard ship may be accomplished by shuttlecraft only. A ship with no Cargo space of its own may store one Artifact per Hangar box (with the artifact stored inside the shuttle), or two per emptied Hangar space. (Note that dropped-out fighters return to their hangar at the end of the scenario, so their boxes may not remain empty.) Artifacts may be stolen by boarding parties undertaking a successful "Hostage Rescue" mission against the storage location.

* * *



Understanding the scale of the problem

CGI inaccuracies in the show have given us the Vorchan/Demos, but there are at least two instances that have lead myself and others to believe that there is yet another, bigger, version of that hull type out there.

The first example is shown during "In the Beginning", when a Vorchan/Demos jumps out of hyperspace and fires on a G'Quan. As it is firing, it destroys the G-Quan in a few shots. This is something I really doubt a Demos could do. In addition, it fires what look like missiles out of its wings.

The second example is in Crusade. In the episode in question (Racing the Night), they find this planet where the plague has also struck, and the inhabitants there capture ships and their crews for medical study. We see this huge chamber filled with many ships, including G'Quans, a few Brakiri looking things, one or two Vree ships, as well as others. Among them is this Centauri ship that looks like a Vorchan but it's BIGGER than the Xill leaning up against it.

(Editors Note: The scene in Racing the Night has a long, steady pan over a spaceship graveyard. Here, a Xill is about one fifth the length of a G'Quan, and an Avoki is simply colossal. The Vorchan wreck looks at least the same size as the G'Quan. There is also what looks to be a Victory-class engine nacelle and an Orion starbase in the wreckage mix...)

So this has led me to believe there is a capital ship version out there. With the help of Todd Boyce we came up with this...



*Shipyard
Supervisor*

By JASON WELLS & TODD BOYCE

CENTAURI VOLITOS

After the Vorchan was introduced, the Centauri navy was looking for something to lead large wolf packs around and provide fighter support. Several designs were suggested, but the same house that designed the Vorchan offered a much larger version of the same hull. Using modular systems, and enlarging the outer hull, the House offered a comparable warship to those provided by the others bidders, but at a smaller cost. Needless to say, money talks, and it was built. It was found the new vessel worked well in either leading wolf packs, or running by itself.

However the design soon fell into disuse for reasons that aren't really understood.

For the most part production simply slacked off, and by the Dilgar war only one small ship yard was producing them. Due to its modular nature, there have been several variants. In fact, the one presented here was introduced just before the Earth-Minbari war. Once the ballistic torpedo came out, it was quickly installed on all in-production units, as well as almost all remaining older ships. When the heavy array was introduced, it was also retrofitted onto the earlier baselines. Production picked up just after the War of Retribution, when the Imperial navy decided it needed more ships.

(The B5W and FA SCSs for this ship are in the Attachments folder)

It's not whether you win or lose, it's how you play the Gaim . . .



GROPOS

By ALEX ROBERTS

THE GAIM army consists of some of the most feared and powerful ground troops in the League.

Genetically engineered and bred for specific tasks, their warriors and support troops are created from birth to be better trained, faster, and stronger than troops from other races.

The Gaim are an insectoid race, and as a result their troops are very different from those of most space faring nations. Engineered for specific tasks, they range from minute flying insects designed to spread biological weapons,

to enormous 10 meter tall heavy assault bugs created to smash through the heaviest armor and fortifications.

Although possessing a large, powerful ground army, the Gaim have not expanded beyond their home world in the, albeit short, time they have been a space faring race. Due to the nature of their race, the Queens on their home world are unwilling to move, and

thus relinquish power at home, to start a new colony. Until the Gaim Queens are able to create a Queen that can represent all of them as ruler of an off world colony, the Gaim will have to remain content to sell their ground troops and biological weapons as mercenaries in exchange for technology to update and upgrade their growing space fleet.

TECHNOLOGY / SPECIAL RULES

Insect Hive Mind: Due to the nature of this insectoid race, ordinary Gaim troops think naught of their self preservation so long as they are within range of control from a Gaim Queen or other specially engineered command and control bug. Due to this, so long as there is a Queen or Command Bug on the board, all Gaim troops are immune to Morale and Pin checks. They are assumed to automatically pass any they are required to take.

Insectoid Body: Due to the lack of hands, very few Gaim troops are armed with ranged weapons. Only the Command Bugs (due to their hands), and the Artillery Bugs (due to their special construction) have ranged weapons. All other Gaim must close with the enemy and tear them apart in close combat.

UNITS

(Note that the names below are not the names the Gaim themselves use to describe their troops. These names would



GAIM: DISPOSITION

be largely unintelligible to most outsiders. Instead, common descriptions used by those troops who have faced them are used below.)

Queen: The main Queens on the Gaim home world often create lower level Queens, personally loyal and responsible to them. Although these Queens are designed to be unable to create or manage colonies of their own, they are effective in controlling and inspiring Gaim troops on the battlefield, as well as producing replacement troops given enough time. These Queens are typically large, slow moving creatures, ranging from 4-6 meters long. They have limited abilities to protect themselves.

Special Rules: Company Command Unit, Forward Observer

Command Bug: These creatures are an outgrowth of the diplomacy insects created by the Gaim Queens to represent their interests outside of the Gaim home world. Recognizing the need for a more bipedal creature to interact with other races' military apparatus, these bugs were designed to look and have the same level of authority and independence as their diplomat bugs.

These Command Bugs generally lead and accompany Gaim mercenary expeditions, liaising with officers or authorities from other races who have hired them. They also have built into them the ability to control their troops at some distance, and as such have the same inspiring hive mind control as would a lesser Queen. Owing to their similarity to regular bipedal aliens, these units are often equipped with purchased weaponry most Gaim are unable to use, typically Centauri Tromo Rifles.

Special Rules: Company Command Unit, Forward Observer, May call for Orbital Bombardment

Warrior Bug: Warrior bugs are the core of any Gaim ground force. Bred for war, these 2-3 meter tall bugs are six legged, with each appendage ending in a sharp piercing point that can tear through enemy troops as easily as it can rip open light armored vehicles. They are terrifying opponents both on the battlefield as well as in a boarding action. Although they are not designed or intelligent enough to carry or use ranged weaponry, their speed and aggressiveness enables them to hold their own, so long as they can close the distance to their opponents. In any case, whatever casualties are taken are easy enough for the Gaim Queens to replace relatively quickly after the battle.

Light Flyer Bug: Recognizing the need to protect themselves from enemy atmospheric fighter craft, as well as the tactical advantages given by airpower, the Gaim Queens have created medium sized, but extremely fast, flying



“ Genetically engineered and bred for specific tasks, their warriors and support troops are created from birth to be better trained, faster, and stronger ”

insects capable of catching and destroying most slow flying atmospheric craft. Those supersonic craft they are too slow to catch are targeted when they return to base, by roving units of Light Flyer Bugs. These bugs are generally 5-7 meters long, with 6 insect wings, and sharp appendages strong enough to rip apart canopies and tear up the wings of fighter craft. They are also capable of swooping down and attacking enemy vehicles should the opportunity present itself.

Special Rules: These bugs are quick, and designed to take out enemy air assets. They may engage enemy hover and VTOL units in close combat even if the unit has not landed. VTOLS are treated as normal vehicles in close combat, and are not automatically destroyed. In addition, the normal rules regarding needing to beat the destroyed threshold if the vehicle has moved still apply.

Heavy Flyer Bug: Heavy Flyer Bugs are designed to transport Warrior and Command Bugs quickly across the battlefield, either to

close a gap caused by an enemy attack, or more often to bring troops to areas inaccessible to them by foot. These very large (20-30 meters long) bugs are capable of transporting 4 infantry units each (note that this excludes Light Flyer Bugs even though they are DVD units).

Worker Bug: Although these bugs are designed for the myriad of tasks needed to keep the hives and Gaim troops operating at peak efficiency, from time to time these Gaim creatures are forced into combat.

Royal Guard: Royal Guard bugs are designed and tasked with protecting critical Gaim interests, usually composed of high and lower level Queens, though sometimes these will be assigned to a particularly important Command Bug. They are quicker, and stronger than ordinary Gaim Warrior Bugs, and are an opponent to be feared in close combat.

Heavy Assault Bugs: Faced with large weapons emplacements fielded by the Narn, Heavy Assault Bugs are the answer the Gaim came upon. These insects are huge, often growing to be over 25 meters long, and 10-15 meters high. They are quick enough to keep pace with their smaller Warrior brethren, and are able to weather most of the strongest weapons the Narn and Dilgar brought to the surface of N'Chak'Fah. These bugs are used to attack heavy enemy armor concentrations or fortifications.

Special Rules: These bugs follow all of the rules for Heavy Assault Tanks in the Minbari Army Book. However, they may make 3 attacks instead of 2 in close combat. Each may be against a different enemy stand in base contact, or they may be concentrated against the same (or multiple, ie 2 attacks on one enemy stand and 1 attack on another) enemy stand.

Recon Bugs: These units are composed of small, 2-3 foot tall flying insects, designed to find enemy units so that the Warriors and Heavy Assault Bugs can engage them. They are very fast moving, but have a limited ability to defend themselves from enemy forces.

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

Artillery Bugs: These units are one of the very few Gaim troops to be genetically designed with a ranged weapon. These huge bugs are capable of creating and shooting very large globules of acid, and are engineered to be able to throw them extremely long distances, in an arc, based on directions received from Recon or Command Bugs. These globules splash down with a relatively large radius of effect, and the acid is strong enough to eat through the top armor of even the heaviest of armored vehicles. These creatures are generally 6-10 meters tall,

and around 12-18 meters long.

Biowarfare Insects: These bugs are not a battlefield unit per se. Rather, they are a swarm of very minute insects, the size of mosquitoes, which are released against enemy formations before a battle. Armed with various biological compounds, they seek out enemy troops, stinging them and infecting them with biowarfare agents.
 Special Rules: Only one of these units may be purchased per Gaim army per game. Before the game, but after deployment, the Gaim player chooses one of the enemy's unlimited or limited platoons. Command Groups and Support Elements may not be chosen. Roll on the following table once for that platoon.
 1-3: No effect
 4-7: d4 random DVD stands within this platoon are sickened and incapacitated for the battle. They may not participate in the game, and are considered destroyed for any victory purposes.
 8-10: d2 random DVA stands within this platoon are sickened and incapacitated for the battle. They may not participate in the game, and are considered destroyed for any victory purposes.
 (Note, if the effect cannot take effect, for example, DVD stands are hurt in an all DVA unit, then the Insects had no effect.)

TO&E

Home World Defense Force:

This is typical of the near endless troops that are positioned on the Gaim home world. Forces like this fought against the Narn and Dilgar ground forces in their abortive invasion attempts.

HQ: 1-2 platoons
 (each has equal authority over the unit. The hive mind prevents any confusion or bickering)
 Unlimited Platoons: 4-8 platoons
 Limited Platoons: 0-2 platoons
 Support Units: 0-3 platoons

HQ:
 1 Command Bug Stand
 2 Warrior Bug Stands
 Cost: 32/64/96/140
 or
 1 Command Bug Stand
 2 Royal Guard Bug Stands
 Cost: 40/80/120/180
 or
 1 Queen
 2 Royal Guard Bug Stands
 Cost: 50/100/150/220

Unlimited Platoons:

Line Platoon:
 4-8 Warrior Bug Stands
 Cost: 7/14/21/32 each

Worker Platoon:
 4-8 Worker Bug Stands
 Cost: 5/10/15/22 each

Limited Platoons:

Light Flyer Bug Platoon:
 4-8 Light Flyer Bug Stands
 Cost: 13/26/39/60 each

Heavy Assault Bug Platoon:
 1-2 Heavy Assault Bugs
 Cost: 22/44/66/95 each

Support Units:

Heavy Flyer Bug Unit
 1-2 Heavy Flyer Bugs
 Cost: 16/32/48/72 each

Recon Unit
 2-4 Recon Bugs
 Cost: 11/22/33/50 each

Artillery Unit (Max 2)
 2-4 Artillery Bugs
 Cost: 38/74/114/165 each

Biowarfare Insect Roll (Max 1 per army)
 Cost: 50 points

Mercenary Strike Force:

These forces are typical of Gaim Mercenary units sold out to other races for ground combat duty. They generally rely on transport from their employer, though sometimes Gaim ships will provide the transport. For a fee of course.

HQ: 1 platoon
 Unlimited Platoons: 4-8 platoons
 Limited Platoons: 0-1 platoons
 Support Units: 0-2 platoons

HQ:
 1 Command Bug Stand
 2 Warrior Bug Stands
 Cost: 32/64/96/140
 or
 1 Command Bug Stand
 2 Royal Guard Bug Stands
 Cost: 40/80/120/180

Unlimited Platoons:

Line Platoon:
 4-8 Warrior Bug Stands
 Cost: 7/14/21/32 each

Limited Platoons:

Light Flyer Bug Platoon:
 4-8 Light Flyer Bug Stands

Cost: 13/26/39/60 each

Heavy Assault Bug Platoon:
 1-2 Heavy Assault Bugs
 Cost: 22/44/66/95 each

Support Units:

Heavy Flyer Bug Unit
 1-2 Heavy Flyer Bugs
 Cost: 16/32/48/72 each

Recon Unit
 2-4 Recon Bugs
 Cost: 11/22/33/50 each

Artillery Unit (Max 1)
 2-4 Artillery Bugs
 Cost: 38/74/114/165 each

Biowarfare Insect Roll (Max 1 per army)
 Cost: 50 points

Mercenary Boarding Unit:

These are more lightly appointed units designed to be sold to other races for use in boarding actions or ship board defense. As a necessity of the smaller areas onboard ship, most of the larger and flying units the Gaim use are unavailable. Nonetheless, in closed quarters these troops are terrifying opponents. These units may also represent boarding units on Gaim vessels.

HQ: 1 platoon
 Unlimited Platoons: 2-6 platoons
 Limited Platoons: 0-2 platoons

HQ:
 1 Command Bug Stand
 2 Warrior Bug Stands
 Cost: 32/64/96/140

Unlimited Platoons:

Line Platoon:
 4-8 Warrior Bug Stands
 Cost: 7/14/21/32 each

Limited Platoons:

Royal Guard:
 (Note that these units are typically only used on important Gaim vessels, or for clients who have provided exceptional service, or deals, to the Gaim Queens)
 4-8 Royal Guard Bug Stands
 Cost: 10/20/30/45 each

(Unit and weapons sheets can be found in the Attachments folder)
 * * *

FICTION: By BEN RUBERY

THE GAIM ships were forming up alongside the Brakiri cruisers. A pair of the hastily upgraded Pri-wakat Astarta class cruisers formed the centre of a squadron of Rakartas. They'd heeded Sheridan's call, and with reinforcements from the Gaim, the Brakiri were about to engage a squadron of Shadow ships. Director Konak watched with satisfaction.

The fleet was small and hastily put together, but the Gaim had provided four warships of cruiser size and a dozen smaller escorts. While some of them were converted freighters, there were six squadrons of fighters, including a squadron of missile fighters.

The ambush was set. A pair of Brakiri freighters would transmit a distress call saying one of them had an engine failure. The Shadows had ships in the area, and after their recent defeat by the Vorlons they would want an easy victory to dent morale among the league races. They'd take the opportunity to destroy a couple of freighters and the ships sent to rescue them. Terror for a minimal exertion.

And they'd find a pair of auxiliary cruisers and a joint Gaim-Brakiri task force waiting for them. The task force had secreted itself behind a large asteroid, and waited.

"All ships reported in," the deputy director reported. Ak-Habil had assumed command of the task force in return for providing the three Avioki heavy cruisers that formed the centre of the formation. A squadron of Pri-wakat warships and a cloud of Gaim formed the rest of the group. The Gaims torpedoes would not be as effective as the Brakiri weaponry against the Shadows, but a few of their ships were equipped with lasers. A telepath was aboard another Avioki, as Konak knew not to put the command and control on the same ship as such an obvious target.

He didn't expect all of his cruiser squadron to survive.

"This is Director Konak, transmit the distress call, transmit the reply in 35 seconds. Deputy, is my flagship ready?"

"It is sir. The fleet is at your command." There was still a place for the formality on the bridge, a reminder of times past. Times that might come again.

"Transmitting the reply sir." The comm officer reported, his eyes tracing the message on his screen. The bridge of an Avioki was cramped, but there had been no Corumai class dreadnoughts available, and he wouldn't have trusted one to function if he had it as the flagship. Plus, in a battle against the Shadows it would be one of the first ships to be destroyed.

There was something to be said for being one of a group when fighting an enemy that could destroy most ships in a single shot.

Waiting, the tracing of seconds across the chronometer. The breathing, slow and forcibly calm, of the bridge crew. These were the sounds Konak associated with battle.

The combat was a blur of fury, motion and death, it had been against the Dilgar, the Drazi, the Centauri, Raiders, the Gaim, the Descari, and now the Shadows. The Shadows were different,

Pawns in the greater game



supposedly unbeatable, but they'd said the same about the Dilgar. The Vorlons had proved the Shadows mortal, and it was his job to confirm it.

"Sir, we're picking up some sort of distortion."

"This is director Konak to all ships, engage."

He picked up four cruiser sized Shadow warships, and another four smaller destroyer sized ships. The black ships were gliding towards the auxiliary cruiser, which pivoted to face them and opened fire. Two beams lanced out from the Shadow ships, and the auxiliary cruisers started to drift apart.

"Pri-Wakat squadron and Gaim fighters, engage the smaller shadow ships and their fighters, Gaim ships, engage the cruisers. Ak-Habil ships, target the cruisers and fire." The fleet shifted according to Konak's orders.

The fleet began to engage, and the Shadows turned their attention to the task force. The Aviokis opened up on the nearest Shadow cruiser, and seven of the twelve beams they fired connected. The cruiser screamed in pain, its tendrils curling inwards as it died.

One down, three to go.

The Pri-wakat ships were engaging the destroyers and fighters, supported by the Gaim fighters, while the Gaim ships moved to engage the Cruisers. The telepath was doing his best to disrupt the enemy ships, but was having no noticeable effect.

Another beam lanced out, cutting a Gaim destroyer in half. As the Gaim cruisers and the Shadows closed, the space was filled with fire. Three of the Gaim ships were torn apart, but one of the Shadow cruisers was overwhelmed and crumpled under the weight of fire.

The Pri-wakat ships were holding their own against the destroyers, and had already destroyed one of them, with another one starting to glow with absorbed energy, for the loss of two Rakarta frigates.

The Shadows were being beaten. A beam lanced out, catching one of the Avioki squadron, cutting away its front section, and was joined by another beam, which cut through the reactor and destroyed the ship in a storm of fire. That was the ship the telepath had been aboard.

The Shadow cruisers turned around and fled, the destroyers doing likewise, but not before one finally gave in to fire from the Astartas and spun out of control, dissolving as it turned end over end.

After a short battle, the Shadows had been defeated. Nine of the task forces ships and thirty one fighters were lost, and some of the other ships were damaged. But they'd won.

The first league engagement against the Shadows in this new phase of the war was a victory. Konak knew the next battle would not be as quick, or easy.

Export Oracles

As an example of the ways various nations re-imagine their purchases, three varieties of the Oracle CL have been reviewed here.

The Gaim Ossari:

Unimaginative, but straightforward, the Gaim armed the Oracle with a pair of assault lasers and a packet torpedo. A twin array was added aft, and a flight of fighters on rails forward, as well as the usual Gaim complement of survivability bulkheads.

(An SCS is available in the Showdowns-6 Support web-site and will be included in Ships of the Fleet II.)

Sh'Lassan Triumvirate:

Featuring the Oracle as the flagships of their fleet, the Sh'Lassans outfitted them appropriately. Since Raiders were their primary enemy, pulse cannons were fitted in wide-angle turrets, and the ELINT suite was partially restored to supplement long-range scouting. As per the Sh'Lassan standard, large batteries of light particle beams replaced the proprietary Interceptors. Three units were delivered before the battle of Akdor, and a fourth has been ordered. *(SCS is in this issue's Attachment's folder.)*

The Mentaban Araska:

Kitted out as a light strike carrier, the Araska trades in the Oracle's ELINT suite and missile rack for eighteen fighters' worth of hangar space. (Typically, two full squadrons are assigned to each class unit, with one flight of four on rotating homeside leave.) Wide fields of fire are provided for the side-mounted railguns, and an additional set of particle beams replaces the Interceptors to supplement defensive fire.

(SCS is in this issue's Attachments folder.)

Optional extras
FINANCE PACKAGES
Low mileage



Reconditioned
Uncle Mike's Used
Starship Lot
Optional extras

By CHRIS NASIPAK

A NATION'S military is one of its most visible symbols of might, prestige, and economic strength. However, not every nation has the resources or the patience to commit to creating one from scratch.

A starship is one of the most technologically sophisticated devices in the known universe. A starship designed with the ruggedness, reliability, and armaments of a warship is even more so. The resources required to design and build such a craft are immense, and for a fleet, the expense becomes simply staggering.

Vast empires, such as the Earth Alliance or Centauri Republic, of course, have conquered this requirement with - eventual - ease. Their ships are powerful, well-built, reliable, and have a proven battle record. Many lesser potentates lack the patience it takes to build such a history and reputation. Why, they argue, should they not buy what they need from one of those greater nations? They will have the ships, the image, and the power, and the seller will have what all militaries are always short of - cash.

Money is not the only inducement for which the great powers will offer such aid, however. Trade concessions are common requests, as are basing rights for their own military. It was in just this fashion that the Sh'Lassan Triumvirate was able to gain the Earth Alliance's help in building up their fleet and putting down the Akdor rebellion. The Triumvirate gained over a dozen ships to add to those they'd already purchased, including their first capital units. The Alliance

gained basing and transit rights in a strategically vital sector, the prestige of having another "client" state, and quite a lot of blood putting down the rebels.

Who got the better of the bargain?

Only the historians will tell us.

THE SHIPS

Just what is out there on the market for your nation to purchase? There is quite a variety.

Centauri Republic - The Centauri have perhaps the largest variety of hulls on the open market. Their primary markets are small nations along the Narn border, such as Balos, who are concerned about Narn expansionism. With several new ship classes introduced over the last decade, the superceded designs are being sold off. The Altarian destroyer is typical of Centauri export designs. Well-rounded, it is not the most maneuverable destroyer on the market. Its weapons payload is average: two to three medium hardpoints forward and one aft, with space for four or five defensive guns and a single flight of fighters. Equipped with quick-firing weapons such as particle or pulse cannon, it makes an excellent workhorse.

Earth Alliance - The Oracle-Delta "light cruiser" is the flagship of Earth's export fleet. The reasoning behind this particular choice is rather murky, and most analysts put it down to wrangling in the Alliance Senate and kickbacks from manufacturers. Lightly armed for its size, it is nonetheless a capital unit, and

the removal of the bulky ELINT sensor equipment leaves room for some expansion. Buyers, however, find it economical as a squadron flagship, or even to restore the sensor package and employ it as a scout.

Narn Regime: The Narn do not, typically, export completed hulls. They are instead one of the foremost dealers in weapons to mount on them. The Narn, Vree, and Deneth dominate the galactic market for pulse, plasma, and particle weaponry.

Minbari Federation: The Minbari typically do not sell weapons or ships, except to the members of their Protectorate, considering the technological level dangerously high for less mature races.

Brakiri Syndicracy: The Brakiri corporations will sell just about anything, short of their own secrets, to those with the money. It comes as a surprise to few that their shipyards deal with the public market. One of their best customers is the Interstellar Mercenaries League, which purchases large numbers of their Ikorta light cruiser - a scrappy little ship, highly maneuverable and well armed for its size. Mounting no less than seven medium hardpoints and a fighter flight, it is only the bulk of the Brakiri gravitic weapons that prevents it from being a major competitor with the likes of the Artemis and Demos for domination of the mid-level class.

Drazi Freehold: The Drazi Warbird is a favorite of several factions, including the Gaim, the IML and the Tirrith Free State. With four oversized medium hardpoints, one standard medium, and two light, it can carry quite an aggressive load of firepower on a highly maneuverable and speedy hull. Cheap to construct, it is not without weaknesses. It lacks defensive firepower, and its hull is not as tough or well-armored as some of its rivals.

Dragonship: No one is quite sure, officially, who constructs these ships, but they are popular with mercenary outfits, more profitable pirate fleets, and several small nations. A large and tough cruiser, powerful thrusters make up for the low maneuverability common to ships of that class, giving it an impressive turn of speed. Its powerful weapons suite is what attracts buyers, with four medium, four light, and two heavy hardpoints, commonly mounting a mixture of pulse, plasma, and particle weaponry. As a further bonus, it has hangar space for a full squadron of fighters and a jump drive.

Barque: Another product of the occasional willing civilian contractor, the Barque is a smaller sibling to the Dragonship. One heavy hardpoint, two medium, and four light give it a respectable punch. Its hangar adds a flight of fighters to the mix. The Barque's main flaw is in its thruster package: a bit of manufacturer corner-cutting leaves it not quite able to keep up with the Dragonship on acceleration. Despite this, it can still turn fast enough to run rings around any capital ship.

This is, of course, only an overview of the many ships available on the open market. There are also the "exciting" possibilities of freighter conversions (fragile, slow, and poorly armed, but better than nothing), or building your own... and, of course, the decision of what to arm them with. Happy Shopping!

The Sh'Lassan second-hand battlefleet

Sh'Lassan Ships And Units
By CHRIS NASIPAK

ARMAK Destroyer

(Base Hull / Unlimited Deployment)

When the Earth Alliance sent its fleet to the support of the League in the Dilgar War, the Sh'Lassan system patrol group was one of many units that found itself stripped of ships to maintain the momentum at the front lines. Raiders promptly became a serious problem. New construction from Earth allowed the diversion of some police craft and other units to deal with the problem, but the Triumvirate had made their decision. They would need to begin fielding a competent, capable naval force of their own. The Earth Alliance was more than willing to accommodate them, though perhaps not as well as the Triumvirate would have wished. The first "lend-lease" package included a small group of Olympus Corvettes, as well as smaller craft and fighters. The ships were delivered stripped of all proprietary technology, and of their entire weapons suites. Sh'Lassan shipwrights did their best with the outdated hulls, refitting them to almost match modern Earthforce standards. When the time came to arm the ships, they turned to home-built technologies, using a mix of missiles, primitive particle beams, and basic matter weaponry.

An SCS is provided in the Attachments folder.

VELTAR Frigate

(Base Hull / Unlimited Deployment)

The first batch of purchases from Earthforce also included several of the aging Laertes patrol frigates. Already mostly replaced by the Tethys cutter, the Laertes were being sold off in large numbers. Armed with the same low-tech mix as the Armak destroyers, they became the mainstay of the Sh'Lassan navy, patrolling the system and escorting civilian vessels along the spacelanes.

An SCS is provided in the Attachments folder.

TRIUMVIRATE Cruiser

(Specialty: Only 3 exist)

Late in the 2250's the Triumvirate began expanding their small navy. The ships were, again, purchased from Earth Alliance surplus. Three Oracle-Delta light cruisers were selected to serve as squadron flag-

ships. The first jump-capable warships the Sh'Lassans possessed, they were also delivered with their weapons suites intact (less the proprietary Interceptor technology). A program to refit them with additional weapons batteries is underway, but as of the assault on Matok none of the ships had completed it yet.

Use the Oracle-Delta SCS, deleting the interceptors.

CAMMORA Patrol Cutter

(Base Hull / Unlimited Deployment)

The Triumvirate's second purchase from Earth Force also included several Tethys police cutters. Like the Oracle-Deltas, they were delivered stripped of the proprietary interceptor technology, and are due for refit. They have also given Sh'Lassan shipwrights their first close look at pulse technology, and may inspire a refit for the aging Armak and Veltar classes.

The only units which participated in the battle preceding the assault on Matok had not yet been refitted, as such, use the standard Tethys SCS and delete the interceptors, as above. The planned refit replaces each interceptor with a pair of Light Particle Beams.

Sh'Lassan PRIME Orbital Station

(Unique Unit)

Construction of this station began shortly after the Triumvirate signed their treaty with the Earth Alliance. It serves primarily as a transfer point for cargo and passengers and is minimally armed. The Triumvirate government has considered upgrading its defenses, but no decision has yet been reached.

Use the 'Small Civilian Base' SCS from Raiders & Privateers.

Fighters

Large numbers of Delta-V fighters have been acquired and are available for deployment from the planetary surface or the station. The Triumvirate has also acquired two squadrons of outdated Nova-class Starfuries from Earthforce. Use the appropriate SCSs as provided in Raiders & Privateers and The Dilgar Invasion for these units.

Putting pacifists on the front foot on the front line

WHILE the Yolu are pacifists, relying on their pacifism and strong defences to prevent being dragged into any of the conflicts going on in league space, they pre-date the Minbari in their voyages into space. Their technology is on par with the Minbari, and they utilise some of the same technology. However their proprietary tech is very different to the neutron laser and jammer, working to weaken the enemy's defences, forcing them to either retreat or be destroyed. The weapon they have developed that is an exception to this is the Destabilization beam. Its piercing damage means that it can seriously damage ships, and make mincemeat out of shadow vessels. So here are some tactics for the Yolu.

A Think carefully about your opponents strengths. Are they a long range duellist or a short range knife fighter? The Yolu have a mixture of weapons, backed with very good EW. A short range knife fighter can be reduced by long range fire from molecular flayers and Fusion agitators. Used in combination these weapons are deadly. I make the assumption people won't be reducing their opponents with a few salvos of long range flayer fire, in character with how the Yolu would act "in real life". While against a short ranged foe this plan is viable; reducing an opponents armour to zero on a structure block, then hitting them with fusion agitators and other weapons. Against an opponent who you can keep out of range this is a viable



Tactical Display

By BEN RUBERY

plan, but against a foe with ranged weapons you have to take shots when you can, eliminating their weapons (which are likely to be faster firing than yours), before closing to destroy them with disruptors and fusion cannon fire.

B Remember your strengths. The Yolu have some impressive technology, with the molecular flayer being a particularly useful weapon, reducing all facing armour by 1 point (and if you can hit a medium, and the Yolu have excellent EW, all armour) and firing every turn with a -1/3 hex range penalty. Unfortunately only the Ulan, Notali and Yuan carry them, and then with restricted firing arcs.

Centerlining an enemy with the Yuan and Ulan will allow you to hit an enemy with two flayers at once. Firing fusion agitators at an opponent, and ignoring the first three points of armour, is a big advantage against enemies with only 4 or 5 points of armour on their structure. Molecular disruptors are so effective that an enemy ship is unlikely to suffer the armour reducing effects of disruptors because the whole structure block will be likely to come off, resulting in a point of two off primary structure, but not a large enough effect early enough.

The Yolu have a profusion of short range

weapons in the form of fusion cannons and molecular disruptors. These are a great asset against Shadows, as the piercing mode combined with the tendril filling fusions will tear apart Shadow ships. Your armour values are high, allowing you to weather fire from light fighters with little damage, and minimising the damage medium and heavy fighters will do.

The Maitau Pursuit frigate costs 600 points, but is well worth it. It can do the close in fighting, picking off ships weakened by flayer fire from your larger ships.

The Utan heavy fighter is an incredibly good fighter. The light molecular disruptor has a -1 per hex penalty, +3 fire control on top of +5 offensive bonus. At range 8 you roll your targets profile to hit it. At range 11 the penalty is only -3 to hit. Against a large capital ship the profile is high enough to allow attacks from outside the CCEW range of enemy ships. Enemy ships will fire back with -22 or -11 to hit against a forward profile of 7. With forward armour of 5 and 15 structure the Utan can easily take hits from most of the league fighters and Sentries without blinking. Yolu ships are also very manoeuvrable, and should use this to keep their opponents where they want them

C Remember your weaknesses. You can easily be swarmed by fighters. You will be outnumbered by most fleets, except for the Hyach, the Minbari and Ancients. This means that a cheap and fast opponent like the Drazis will

YOLU: FIGHT OR FLIGHT?

close as quickly as possible and hit you with everything they have. So keep the range open.

Unless you fight an opponent like the Hurr, Grome, Descari, Vree or Raiders, it is not advisable to close to less than 25 hexes until your opponent has been softened up by several rounds of fire. Most of your opponents will have shorter weapon charge times than you, and they will exploit this depending on the range that they normally engage at. Ion cannons, Neutron, Battle and Assault Lasers will cause trouble. Although weapons producing only 2 rakes will be mostly ineffective, the sheer number produced may be a problem.

Beware ship attack LCVs, they can swarm like fighters, and you do not get the benefit of firing fusions to pick them off first.

Plasma and matter weapons bypass the strength of your armour, try and rake these weapons off at range.

While your ships cost nearly as much as the Minbari, they are still affected by the jammer. Close to point blank against the Minbari and then hit them with everything.

D Resolve weapons in the order that benefits you most. Molecular flayers, molecular disruptors, and then fusion agitators if possible. The disruptors remove the structure block and hopefully reduce the primary structure armour by 1 or 2. Then the fusion agitators turn into giant standard damage weapons as everything overkills to the primary structure. Even Sharlins will have problems with this much damage. Resolving molecular flayers first makes many non-rakeable systems rakeable. The advantage of this cannot be over emphasised.

Using these tactics and tips you should be able to use the Yolu to obliterate your opponent. As for the Yolu fleet, Showdowns gives you a limited choice.

YOLU WARSHIPS

Yuan Dreadnought - An impressive ship. With four flayers, and sixteen heavy weapons to destroy your opponent, its vulnerability is its limited fusion cannon suite. With only 12, it can only bring 6 to bear in some directions, meaning that an opponent only needs to deploy several flights in the spots with limited cover and he can chew away at your weapons and structure. One must note that the Yuan is an incredibly manoeuvrable dreadnought; a turn stat of 1x speed means it turns like most races cruisers. It should be escorted however, and is not worth purchasing in a battle smaller than about 10,000 points, as in smaller battles it is too many points in one target.

Ulan Patrol Cruiser - With a wide selection of weapons, good manoeuvrability, good EW and good armour, this ship is a balanced and useful

design. Its only limit is the range of its weapons, as 6 of its 8 heavy weapons are molecular disruptors.

Aluin Gunship - Never underestimate the striking power of destabilizer beams, and a pair plus 10 molecular disruptors makes this an ideal gunship. The Aluin suffers the usual gunship weakness of poor fighter defences. Its lack of flayers is another handicap. This ship needs to be escorted and part of an integrated fleet formation to survive.

Maltra Scout - With ten fusion beams this ship can actually be used to shoot fighters in an integrated fleet formation. 14 EW makes it a potent scout, and at 900 points it is one of the cheaper Yolu ships.

Notali Carrier - the only Yolu ship apart from the dreadnought to carry fighters. With a flayer and six heavy weapons, but only six fusions, it is reasonably armed. Its strength is its 24 fighters, and it is the ship of choice for bringing Yolu fighters to the field.

Maitau Pursuit Frigate - 600 points, three fusion agitators, six fusions cannons and 10 EW on a MCV. Use it to exploit weakened sides created by flayers, to destroy enemy MCVs, to escort larger Yolu ships, and to generally race around being maneuverable, cheaper than a White Star, but having none of the problems. Looking at its Minbari equivalent, the Shaveen, for 75 points less, and it is a clear winner by a significant margin. It is also competitive when compared with the Torotha, but this is mainly due to the Minbari preference for useless EP guns on their smaller warships.

Utan heavy fighter - The dogfight abilities of the Starfury, the best armour for a non-ancient fighter, 15 structure and a -2 dropout bonus, and an awesome anti-ship weapon that, if deployed in the manner described above, can kill enemy ships with a minimal threat of retribution. When fighting a TA or LPB equipped race these ships can strike using their light molecular disruptors at ranges that the ships cannot touch them from. The Utan is 110 points each, more even than the Nial, and so must be cunningly used. It is not a dogfighter, and should not be treated as such.

This is the major problem for the Yolu. They have no cheap interceptor, and the fighter they do have is so expensive that dogfighting enemy heavy fighters will get them killed too quickly for not enough gain. The answer to this is to use them to attack enemy ships and an overlapping formation with your ships to deal with enemy fighter attacks. One set of weapons Ulan should truly fear are burst beams, EP guns and shock cannons, all of which force automatic dropouts and ignore armour.



Shipyard Supervisor

By BEN RUBERY

YOLU ULACA BEAM CRUISER

An uncommon variant of the Ulan patrol cruiser, this altered weapon fit strains the reactor beyond its limit, even with the removal of the aft molecular disruptors, but gives a Yolu ship designed to damage an opponents vital systems and force a retreat. Fortunately for the Yolu it also proved impressive against the Dilgar and Shadows in their forays into Yolu space. This ship is reserved for the occasions when ships need to be seriously discouraged from trespassing in Yolu space, and many Ulanas were converted to this design during the Dilgar war. The war with the Kor-Lyans after the defeat of the Dilgar has led to many beam cruisers being retained in service for such emergencies, even if the usual peacetime deployment is convoy escort and guarding installations.

YOLU KALTA HEAVY OSAT

This large OSAT marries 4 long range heavy weapons, 2 molecular flayers and six fusion cannons with a powerful EW array. During the Dilgar war its high armour made it difficult for Thoruns to take out, and made the Dilgar assaults on Yolu colonies very difficult. Before the war this was the largest defensive installation deployed around the Yolu colonies. After the war, as the Yolu rebuilt their territory, they deployed starbases around all colonies to discourage further attacks.

YOLU LANTA OSAT

This light OSAT is the main constituent of Yolu defence nets, featuring a destabilizer beam and a molecular flayer, along with an array of fusion cannons. It is their cheap version, and is seen in large numbers around bases, jump gates, and civilian installations.

YOLU FALLASAN STARBASE

This large starbase deploys two squadrons of fighters, 12 Destabilisation beams, 12 Fusion agitators, 6 molecular flayers but only 12 fusion cannon. It tends to rely on an OSAT net around the base to destroy incoming fighters, as they can deploy a far larger number of fusion cannons while the base reserves power for increasing fusion agitator output.

Before the Dilgar war the Yolu had one of these orbiting their homeworld, but after the war they built one around each of their colonies, hoping by a show of strength to avoid being attacked again. This did not prevent the Shadows trying to bring them into the war, but none of these bases or the Yolu colonies they orbited came under direct attack during the war.

(Note: The B5W and FA SCS's for the above ships can be found in the attachments folder)



WRONG TURNS

Picture: JJ O'Shaughnessy

FICTION:

By ALEXANDER KETTLE

SHORTLY after the defeat of Clarke's forces at Earth, the prototype Warlock advanced destroyer EAS Warlock found itself fleeing the victorious rebels. After fleeing to the Brakiri system of Gamma 7, she ran afoul of a small Brakiri convoy. After a brief battle in which she dispatched the escorts and began capturing supplies from the freighters, the Hyperion cruiser EAS Vigilance arrived. Once again however, after a quick exchange of fire, the Warlock opened a jump point and fled, fearing Brakiri and EA reinforcements. Unfortunately for the crew of the Warlock, a group of Torvalus detected the Shadow elements in the ship while deep in hyperspace and attacked. That threat behind them, the battered Warlock continues its lonely journey across space to find a safe haven.

Having narrowly slipped away from her pursuers at Gamma 7 and escaped the Torvalus in the tides of hyperspace, the Warlock, desperate to avoid further battles with the Brakiri instead turned towards Cascor space, hoping to throw off pursuit. Knowing that the Cascor borders were relatively lightly defended, Captain Blake ordered the Warlock's course set for Mitoc, thinking to eventually circle around and back into EA space from the Rim.

Once again however the Warlock's luck took a turn for the worse, and jumping into the Mitoc system they jumped right into the middle of a small system patrol. The Cascor were caught entirely by surprise and the ensuing battle, occurring at short range, was decidedly brutal.

SCENARIO ONE

Forces:

Cascor: 1 x Crocti Patrol Carrier
+ 12 Calaq Assault fighters,
12 Caccar Ultra light fighters
1 x Tacacci Strike Frigate
+ 12 Caccar Ultra light fighters

1 x Standard Freighter Cargo module

Clarke: EAS Warlock + any remaining fighters from previous scenario

Setup:

Use standard map.

Prior to setup, Warlock player secretly chooses jump in hex including direction and speed (following normal restrictions).

Cascor: Cascor player may place ships on map any location, direction, speed (up to 6). Ships are considered to be at Crew Readiness: Patrol stations as detailed in Showdowns-1.

Clarke: Warlock jumps in at pre-recorded position (using standard scatter rules) on turn 1

Victory Conditions:

Cascor: The Cascor commander realizes that he must hold out against this ship as long as possible, hoping for reinforcements to arrive from in-system. But he will not want to risk the total destruction of his ships. Tackling such a powerful opponent should provide the ultimate rush; a real adventure on an otherwise boring mission, but isn't worth losing the lives of the entire patrol group over.

Minor Victory - Hold off the Warlock for 5 turns before withdrawing

Victory - hold off the Warlock for at least 10 turns before withdrawing, help isn't coming.

Incredible Victory - Destroy the Warlock. Can their be a bigger boost to a career?

Any other result is a loss.

Warlock: You're still not at peak strength but you've caught the Cascor unawares- finish them off quickly and then be off. No point taking a chance on reinforcements turning up to make things worse.

Minor Victory - destroy at least 1 Cascor vessel
Victory - destroy both Cascor vessels, never leave witnesses.

Any other result is a loss.

Historical Outcome:

Cursing his luck for running into the Cascor, Captain Blake attacked, quickly ripping apart the carrier before it could launch its fighters. Unfortunately during the battle the Strike Frigate powered up and out ran the Warlock, using its few ultra light fighters to hold off the heavier Thunderbolts from the Warlock.

Once again the Warlock was a fugitive, and believing himself to be out of time Captain Blake ordered the Warlock to jump as soon as the jump engines had recharged. Somehow they had to get back to EA space and seek allies, but with the Earth task group behind him, and a soon to be alerted Cascor fleet ahead, the only remaining route was into Descari space, and so the course was set while frantic repairs were made.

It was just one of those weeks.

Entering Descari space, Captain Blake ordered the Warlock to come out of hyperspace at the very edge of the Bestine system, well away from any inhabited colonies, planning to lay low and finish minor repairs before moving on again. But again lady luck had turned sour on them, and they came out of hyperspace into yet more trouble. A single Scorata Battleship, a pair of freighters, and a number of loose cargo containers floating free. The battleship, pride of the Descari fleet, was undergoing replenishment and conducting trials of some new systems far out from the space lanes, and the prying eyes of aliens. Immediately the Captain ordered communications jammed, fighters launched, and once again the Warlock joined battle.

SCENARIO TWO

Forces:

Descari: 1 Scorata Battleship, 2 civilian freighters (no cargo pods), 6 cargo pods (free floating)

Clarke: EAS Warlock + any remaining fighters from previous scenarios

Setup:

Use standard map setup

Cascor: Setup the Scorata, freighters and cargo anywhere within 10 hexes of the center of the map, all at speed 0. Scorata is at action stations as they have been running simulations and test exercises, so while they're at a starting speed of 0, they can enter combat immediately.

Warlock: Warlock may jump onto the map from any spot within 10 hexes of the map edge (ignore direction of entry scatter- ship must enter moving towards center of map as best it can. Other scatter rules apply)

Victory:

Descari: An enemy has breached your homeworlds space- Alien invaders! You never trusted the Terrans in the first place, now your fears are vindicated, crush them.

Minor Victory - one freighter escapes, all other ships lost- at least the homeworld will be warned of the human treachery

Victory - one freighter escapes, cargo pods destroyed - the homeworld will be warned, and the enemy has been denied your precious supplies

Incredible Victory - destroy the Warlock - once again you have proved the might of the Descari, Alien scum be warned!

Warlock: A secret make-shift re-supply depot out on the fringe of Descari space, filled with precious supplies and equipment. All that stands in your way are two freighters and a Battleship. Finish them off to secure the time you need to capture the cargo pods to repair your ship!

Minor Victory - one freighter escapes all other ships destroyed, cargo pods intact - an enemy ship escaped - you have 6 turns to grab supplies before you have to get under way again, the Descari reinforcements will be coming.

Victory - destroy all enemy ships, at least 1 enemy cargo pod intact - you now have time to make repairs before continuing, the dream lives on .

Major Victory - destroy all enemy ships and capture all cargo pods intact - this is just getting too easy, maybe your luck is starting to turn around at last?

Historical outcome:

The Warlock suffered heavily at the hands of the battleship, but in the end it was inevitable, the pride of the Descari fleet was no match for the massive Warlock. The Descari had managed to destroy a pair of the cargo pods, but with the other two intact and their presence unknown for the moment, the crew was able to make several much needed repairs. Amazed at the luck of capturing so many supplies intact, captain Blake realized that that kind of luck couldn't go on, they had to find a safe haven, somewhere they could hole up until the battle could be rejoined... the beginnings of a desperate plan began to form.

To be continued...

IN BABCOM THIS FEBRUARY . . .

“In Italy for 30 years under the Borgias they had warfare, terror, murder, and bloodshed, but they produced Michelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci, and the Renaissance. In Switzerland they had brotherly love - they had 500 years of democracy and peace, and what did that produce? The cuckoo clock.”

- The Third Man

DRAKH & THE SHADOW ALLIES

Deck the space-lanes with hunks of melted slag

BattleForce: January 2002
Compiled by CHRIS NASIPAK

THE YEAR before the last Shadow War was a time of great chaos among the League of Non-Aligned Worlds. The star nations of the League formed and broke alliances, started and finished wars, and pursued their own ambitions with reckless abandon. Each alliance was constantly on the watch for treachery from its members, and for attack from without. Raiders plied the spacelanes, preying on freighters that hauled the precious war material from factory to fleet. And lurking in every corner... the Shadows. The Battle of Nu 13 is studied now by many military cadets as one of the hallmarks of this era of warfare. The battle was a wild, chaotic melee, confused and confusing. It is known for certain that it began when a convoy, escorted by Belt Alliance mercenaries, was attacked by a small Raider fleet. By the time it was done, over a dozen ships were reduced to blasted, broken hulks.

NUMBER OF PLAYERS:

As many as you can get.

SETUP:

Arrange two maps long-edge together to form the playing area. Designate one map corner as holding a Jump Gate.

BELT ALLIANCE CONVOY:

- 1x Heavy Gunboat (6x Gorith)
- 2x Medium Gunboat
- 1x Q-Ship
- 3x Standard Freighter
- 2x Ore Barge

Place the Heavy Gunboat near the center of the map. Set up the remaining ships within eight hexes of it. All freighters are considered "heavily laden" according to the rules in Raiders & Privateers and start the game at

speed of 2.

RAIDERS (ISHKARI FREE MERCENARIES)

- 1x Strike Carrier (24x Delta-V)
- 2x Barque (6x Double-V with 2 missiles each)
- 2x Sloop (6x Delta-V each)

Jump in on turn one after the Belt Alliance player sets up.

LEAGUE ALLIANCE

Form a fleet according to the Battle Force rules below or use one of the included forces.

Jump in or enter from a map edge on Turn 3. You are arriving in response to the convoy's distress signal, but are wary of a suspected enemy attack in the area. (It is easiest to run this battle if the League Alliance's three squadrons are each run by a separate player. This allows each, for example, to draw on Reinforcements, and their own victory conditions.)

ENEMY ALLIANCE

Form a second fleet according to the Battle Force rules, or use one of the included forces. Jump in or enter from a map edge when a Red Ace is drawn from the Reinforcements deck, or on turn 10 if it has not arrived yet by then.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

Each player should keep track of their point totals separately.

All players:

- 2 for each Reinforcement Card drawn
- 5 for each ship lost

Belt Alliance

- +5 for each Raider ship crippled or destroyed
- +5 for each freighter that successfully reaches the jump gate.

Raiders

- +5 for each freighter crippled (NOT destroyed)

League Alliance

- +5 for each Shadow or Enemy Alliance ship

destroyed (if they arrive)

Enemy Alliance

- +5 for each Shadow or League Alliance ship destroyed

REINFORCEMENTS

At the start of each turn, any player may pay 2 victory points to draw a card from a standard 54-card deck. Consult the table below to see what sort of help is received:

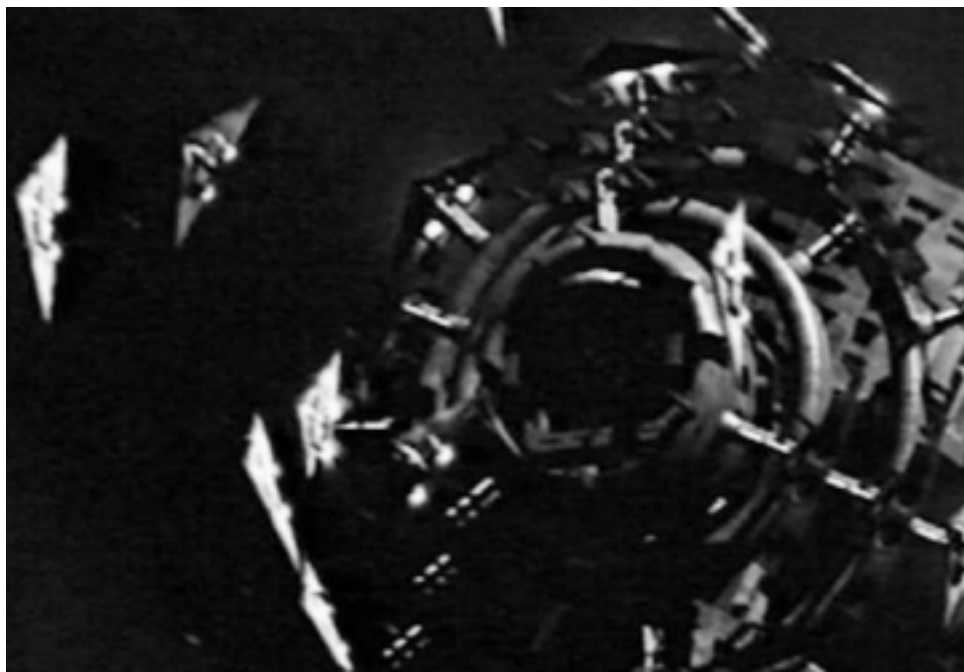
Draw	Result
Numerical 2-7	No reinforcements available
Black 8-10	1 flight of light fighters
Red 8-10	1 flight of any fighter type
Jack	Any 1 ship, HCV or smaller.
Queen	Small squadron: Up to 1000 points of ships and fighters, no capital ships
King	Large squadron: Up to 1500 points of ships and fighters
Red Ace	The expected Enemy Alliance squadron arrives early, or gets a free draw.
Black Ace	Two Shadow Cruisers and three Shadow Destroyer decide to join the fun

Play continues until everyone is either dead, disengaged, or otherwise no longer shooting at anyone else. At that point, total up the Victory Points earned by each player. The highest-scoring player has "won", if victory is possible in such a chaotic mess.

BATTLEFORCES

The January BattleForce rules were as follows:

- 1) All units must have an In-Service Date of 2260 or earlier
- 2) Units may only be chosen from the League and its associates - no Centauri, Narn, Minbari, Earth, Raider, or Ancients.
- 3) All units must be from officially published



sources

- 4) No freighters, bases, OSATs, or minefields
- 5) Select one "core" race, choose 3,500 points of units for this squadron
- 6) Select one "neighbor" race, choose 1,500 points of units for this squadron
- 7) Select one other "ally" race, again with 1,500 points to form a squadron

Someone Old, Someone New, Someone Brakiri... (Dan Foxman)

Primary: Descari

Scorran NCA (12x Noscha)	1410
Rulnar DDH	625
Rulthar DDG (2H, 2C, 4L msl)	490
Cruscava FFE	375
3x Norva-II GB	600

An under-appreciated race with excellent medium-range firepower. The ships go right down the enemies' throats, while the gunboats and fighters flank to one side together or intercept wolfpacks. The quick recharge and consistent damage of the plasma bolters will allow you to easily allocate the right amount of firepower to do the job.

First Ally: Yolu

Maltra SC	900
Maitau FF	600

The Maltra's 14 EW will provide all the ECM this fleet will ever need. Even WhiteStar captains should be afraid of the Maitau: three 5d10+10 guns plus six Fusion Beams on a medium hull...

Second Ally: Brakiri

3x Antoph CL	1500
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The long-range firepower of the fleet. With the Grav Cannons to back up the heavier Beams, these ships can keep up the pressure at nearly any range. Quite possibly the best workhorse CL of any of the League races.

Something Big, Something Bad, Something

Grey... (J. Wells)

Primary: Grome

- 1 Groth Gunship
- 2 Mogorta Warships
- 1 Morgat Heavy Frigate
- 1 Telgar Defense Frigate
- 11 Regla fighters

First Ally: Hurr

- 3 Boroca Gunships

Second Ally: Vree

- 1 Xorr War Saucer
- 1 Xurr Conversion Saucer
- 1 Xvell Escort Saucer

Use the Groth as the all around brawler for the Grome with the Telgar providing the defensive fire against fighters (it will generally stick in the same hex or one hex away and follow its every move). The Mogorta's will also go ship hunting, but they would pretty much stay in a loose formation providing mutual support to each other and the Groth, with the Morgat helping to cover any weak link in the formation and the Regla's on interception duty.

The Grome will take the middle of the deployment zone. The Hurr will take one corner and try to flank the enemy and or keep the enemy from flanking the main Grome force. The Vree are my real flanking force. They will take the other corner and go as fast as they can to get into a good position and unload at medium to short range with the Xvell going fighter hunting and try to watch the other Vree ships back.

Something Aging, Something Young, Something Abbai... (Aaron Hartwell)

Primary: Abbai:

- 2 Lakara Cruiser
- 3 Tiraca Frigate
- 1 Skiatha
- 6 Kotha Fighter

First Ally: Hyach

- 1 Senchlat Kes
- 1 Alichy Kav

Second Ally: Grome

- 1 Trokan Flagship
- 1 Telgar Defense Frigate
- 6 Regla Fighter

So the Basic Idea of this fleet is to make a group that can't be hit, while it slowly picks away at you.

The Abbai were chosen as the primary race because they are a great defensive race. The Hyach were chosen simply due to the fact that they are close by neighbors, but keeping in line with the unhittable idea the sub fits in well.

The Abbai ELINT Vessel would provide blanket protection, the Hyach one would add offensive bonuses, and also remain in reserve. If the enemy managed to take out the Skiatha it would switch to blanket protection.

The Grome were taken for one reason, the Flak Cannon. The Abbai ships would put all Defensive EW in one of their Impeders. This would be bolstered by protection from flak cannons, and blanket protection. The Flak Cannons would be essential to making the fleet "un-hittable". They would be particularly useful if enemy ships got the drop on the Abbai and were able to get to the non-active impeder protected side. Not sure if it would work. It very much sacrifices offence for defense. But it's a pretty cool fleet in my mind, not to mention a fleet almost ensured of pissing your opponent off.

Something Ballistic, Something Molecular, Something Laser... (Venlesh)

Kor-Lyan Main Force:

Koskova Battlecruiser	800
Raklavi Carrier	600
Vaklar Logistics Frigate	450
24 Kalti Intercept Fighters	1104

Each standard shuttle (4) and fighter carries a basic fighter missile (224 points). 12 Fighters carry an additional FL-missile (120 pts) and six of those a dud (6 pts.). 20 AF-missiles are distributed among the D-racks (2 per rack) - 80 pts. All other racks get one long range and one heavy missile (100 pts.). Two ballistic mines for the Vaklar complete this fleet. - 3500 points

First Ally: Yolu

Maltra Scout	900
Maitau Pursuit Frigate	600

Second Ally: Hyach

- Senchlat Kam with Salvo Specialist 800
- Alichy Kav (Sub) with Stealth Spec. 700

The Maltra Scout should provide blanket EW for the rest of the fleet (at least at the beginning), and then use its EW to help the Senchlat Kam and Alichy Sub make a killing blow against the most dangerous enemy ship. The Kor-Lyan should concentrate on the smaller units and the opponent shouldn't get the feeling that he can use too much OEW. The Kalti combined with the AF-missiles should keep any fighters at bay. The Maitau has a rather flexible role, either to keep the opponents smaller vessels at bay or to help the other ships take down a dreadnought/battleship/...

BABCOM

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Different strokes

Miniature painting tips:
By **DARREN PERRYMAN**

Preparation

Ensure that the miniature has all the flash removed (the excess metal that hangs off the miniature). Although some flash can be removed with your fingers, this is best achieved with a scalpel or penknife, as it gives a smoother finish. It is also not a bad idea to wash the miniature to remove any impurities that may be on its surface that could affect the paint. A weak dishwashing detergent solution or water can be used along with an old toothbrush to give it a good scrub. Even a simple wipe with a damp cloth can prove quite beneficial.

Undercoating

I always undercoat my miniatures as it definitely assists the paint to apply and bond to the miniature. Depending on the type of effect you want you could do it in either white or black. Black tends to darken colors applied to it and is really effective on miniatures that are going to be basically black with some dry-brushing or detailing (as half your job is done!). I prefer a white undercoat as it makes colors applied to it more bright and vibrant. Colors can be darkened down later if required.

General Preparations

Make sure you have a clean area setup to do your painting with good lighting (a desk style lamp is good). Remember to have something down to catch any spills, splatters or excess paint (I also use it to do impromptu mixing). Depending on the miniature, it can be advantageous to paint the whole thing before assembly. This enables you to paint in some areas that you may find it difficult to get to after the miniature is assembled. If the miniature is going to have some sort of patterning on it, it may be best to do that when it's assembled, as you may have problems lining the pattern up later (just look at those G'Quans).

Paint and Brush Selection.

Always have a good range of colors available and consider what mixing you need to do. If you can get a pre-mixed color that matched what you want, grab it. This will save subtle color changes if you have to mix colors all the time, especially if it is a basic color used across a few miniatures. I prefer using acrylics rather than enamels as I think they mix well, dry quite quickly, are easy to clean up, offer a quite good range of colors and enable the ability to do simple washing and dry-brushing effects. Ensure that you have the right brushes for the work you're intending on doing. A 000 (triple zero) is excellent for the fine detail, but use a 0, 1 or 2 for those large areas. I would also recommend using an old larger brush or a specific dry-brushing brush to enable you to do highlights.

General Painting

Go for the large areas first and work your way down to the finer detail. Always let the paint dry enough prior to applying additional coats or detail (you'd hate to have the colors mix badly). Spot touch-ups are inevitable whilst you're painting, so be prepared for them (a major reason for having pre-mixed paint). Have a damp cloth, or cloth and thinners for enamels, for "erasing" detail work you're not satisfied with where appropriate.

Washing

I like to use a wash effect to get that dirty "used" feel to a miniature. It can really grubby up the colors and give it that battle-tested look, as well as bring

out some of that finer detail on the miniature. There are two ways of doing this with acrylics; by either buying specific inks for the task, or watering down an appropriate color to do the job, I tend to use the latter. Simply get a small amount of the color desired (it really only works well with darker colors), and dip into your water supply to get with a brush full of water. Mix this on your mixing area (or the plastic blister pack you got the miniature in) until you get a good color water mix. I can best describe it as colored water, which if applied to paper discolors it like ink, but is still quite watery. Use an old brush to apply this to the miniature. This should have the effect of darkening the color you applied it to, as well as running into the detail on the miniature. You may have to move the solution into some of the more detailed areas to ensure it gets into all the cracks and lines. As it is still quite watery, it should naturally be drawn to the lines, and when it dries will leave only the color behind in amongst all the lines. It really brings out those lines well. However, it doesn't work quite so well on lines in the middle of large flat sections.

Dry-brushing

This is simple technique of adding highlights to a miniature. It works well on miniatures with some detail on large flat areas, or to do metal-like finishes. This can really damage a brush, so only use old brushes or those made for the purpose. To dry-brush take the old brush, or dry-brush, get some paint on it and use a piece of paper to "remove" the majority of the paint. The brush is ready when the brush only makes a fine powdery like application. Quickly move to the model and briskly (and somewhat vigorously) continue to "dust" the figure to capture all the raised detail. Use a color that is slightly lighter than the color you're applying it, or mix white with the base color you're going over, to get the best effect on raised detail. This process is very versatile. I use it to get a metallic effect by doing it with silver on top of a black to get a great "gun metal", or to add the overlaid color patterns to Minbari or Vorlon vessels. It can also be used to fade two colors together more seamlessly than plain mixing. This effect can be done after washing to really get a good contrast to a miniature grading from dark to light as you move from line detail to raised detail.

Finishing touches

Paint the bases, unless they are quite clear. A plain black works well, you could speckle it to make it look more like a star field. I always recommend varnishing miniatures to protect the paint job. There are two types of varnish available gloss or matt/satin. Some people really like the gloss effect and it can look good on some models (particularly for the organic look of Shadow and Vorlon vessels). I however prefer the matt finish as the dull look is more appropriate for the majority of cases, but matt varnish is less tough than gloss. For the best combination give the miniature a light gloss coat, let it dry thoroughly and then finish it off with a matt coat. You therefore get the strength of the gloss with the appearance of a matt finish.

* * *