

Star Fleet Warlord News

Issue #10

The Official Newsletter of the Greater Magellanic Cloud

4th Qtr 1995

SFW HALL OF FAME UPDATE

| Game | Winner | Corporation | Victory |
|------|--------------|---------------------|------------|
| H1 | Team victory | Coalition team | Military |
| H12 | Team victory | Coalition team | Military |
| 33 | Matt Smyth | Cat Who Ate Rudolph | 10 sectors |
| 34 | Jack Novak | ADHD Warriors | 83 sites |
| 35 | Todd Kagan | Weststar Resources | 85 sites |

Game #33 was a Doomsday Game, scheduled to end on a particular turn which players DIDNÖT know in advance! This turn was the end of Y188 (Turn #23). Matt Smyth won by virtue of having 10 sector bonuses after the Next Turn Generator ran (but only 107 sites). Second place went to Jerome WrightÖs Mind Control Lasers (8 sectors, 134 sites), third to Jack NovakÖs Corrupt Crusaders (8 sectors, 121 sites), fourth to Gene MalinÖs Privateer Star Corp (8 sectors, 75 sites), and fifth to Jeff SmithÖs IÖll Wake Up...Later (7 sectors, 89 sites). All of these Corps had a legitimate chance to win right up until the end of this exciting game.

Game #34 was a standard game with an unusual ending. The winning player, Jack Novak, had 83 sites and 4 sector bonuses, well within the victory conditions. However, another player actually had more sector bonuses than he did: Gene MalinÖs Corellian Star Corp with five of them. Eagle-eyed readers might note that both these players were also in the running for Game #33 (above)Ñdoing well in two back-to-back games is an impressive accomplishment!

Game #35 was an Undead Game, meaning players couldnÖt be knocked out just by losing their Home Office. (As it turned out, most chose to drop anyway, which is somewhat depressing, but taught us here at AOG the lesson that not all game variants work out as planned!) Todd Kagan pretty much had the game wrapped up in Y182 or so and crushed all opposition to win at the end of Y184. Interestingly enough, as with Game #34, he had less sector bonuses than an opponent (Todd had 3, while Mark HallÖs Space Cadets had 5, but only 57 sites).

Games H1 and H12 were historical games. In H1, the Alliance team was fragmented and disoriented from the start, with one of the Gorn players dropping out without informing his allies. By the time he was replaced the game was all but over, and when the Southern Federation fell in Y185, the Alliance surrendered. In game H12, which was much closer, the Alliance surprised the Coalition by wiping out the Western Lyrans in an ultra-sneaky move with a small strike fleet. The Western Gorns fell at almost the same time, however, and when the Alliance saw that two more of their Corporations would disappear in Y182, they gave in and surrendered.

We STILL have not had an Alliance victory in any of the six historical games to date! Several rules changes are being considered to help the Alliance. The two currently in review are:

(1) Reduce the CoalitionÖs starting EP treasuries so they are even with the Alliance. Under current rules the Coalition begins with 1250 EPs, the Alliance with 1000 (note that this is NOT income, this is simply a starting treasury value). If the Coalition had only 1000 EPs, much of their starting advantage would be countered.

(2) Give the Alliance a price break when buying optional items. The Hydrans would always pay 4 EPs for fighters (instead of 5), the Kzintis would always pay 0.8 EPs for drones (instead of 1.0), and the Gorns would always pay 2.5 EPs for commandoes (instead of 3.0). The Federation would receive no additional benefits (they donÖt need any).

Let us know what you think!

RULES CLARIFICATIONS

There are a few orders which are frequently misused, often because they are ambiguously worded in the rulebook, or because we werenÖt clear on their overall purpose. HereÖs an update on these rules:

REQUEST ADS (RA order)

This order can only be set to ONE of the following things at a time: ONE race, PRIMARY, or ALL. You CANNOT set it to more than one race simultaneously. Every now and then we get a turn with several RA orders in a row, such as ÖRA FÖ followed immediately by ÖRA GÖ. This is a waste of time; you wouldnÖt receive any ads from the Federation in this case.

LISTEN FOR BATTLES (LB order)

This order can ONLY be set to ONE SECTOR AT A TIME. You gain NO BENEFIT from issuing it several times in a row. Unfortunately, the rulebook is not very clear on this, but if you think about it, if you could use it on multiple sectors, there would be no reason not to issue it on every sector within two positions of your home sector. Common sense should tell you this is too good a deal!

PHONE ON/OFF (PH order)

The primary purpose of this order is to turn your phone announcement on or off, so that other players will (or wonÖt) receive your number when they meet you. You do NOT need to issue this order when your phone number changes. Simply put a note on your turn that you have changed phone numbers and weÖll be happy to update it for you without making you use an order line.

Please note that the PH order only works for domestic voice phone numbers, not for overseas numbers, pagers, phones with extensions, fax numbers, etc. If your phone number is NOT a standard voice line with a three-digit area code and a seven-digit number, PLEASE use the Personal Information order (PI) to tell this to other players. Otherwise they wind up calling us here at AOG, and many times we simply canÖt help. In a similar vein, please be sure to let us know whenever your phone number changes. I canÖt tell you how many times players have called to ask if I know the new number for a player who has moved. Usually thereÖs nothing I can do in these cases.

LOGISTICS BASES (LOGB order)

This order requires actual repair points, so Engineers and Hive Ships canÖt use it. Also, please note that you canÖt use a Logistics Base for the GETC order. (Note: The LOGB order is not in the rulebook, so donÖt look for it there. If you havenÖt heard of it, wait a few turns and youÖll get a description during play.)

IN THIS ISSUE...

This issue weÖll devote some space to updating you on the new Ship List and its associated new rules. (Since this updates some of the existing rules in the Revision 7.4 rulebook, weÖll also print them in the Ship List itself, but you can consider this a preview. The newsletter also provides us the opportunity to discuss these changes in more detail.)

WeÖd also like to take some time to list some of the most commonly made mistakes on Star Fleet Warlord turns, along with suggestions on how to correct these problems. WeÖve been putting this article off for far too long!

NEW SHIP LIST UPDATE

The Ship List Update is still in progress. The list itself is done; it's now being checked for errors. (We want to avoid the kind of dumb mistakes we had last time, such as forgetting to put variant OS down for the D-PSC, an Initial Build ship.) We expect to take it to press by the end of October.

We are making a few minor rules changes/additions with this version of the Ship List. These rules are listed below. **THESE WILL ONLY AFFECT GAMES 46 AND BEYOND!!! EXISTING GAMES WILL USE THE CURRENT RULES!!!**

HIT POINTS

Hit Points (HP) have been separated from the DF as a new statistic. DF no longer has any bearing on how much damage a ship can take. Anywhere in the rules where DF is referred to for damage absorption should be translated into hit points.

When a generic ship changes missions to the OD mission (or out of that mission), only the DF is changed, not the hit points. For example, a monitor with 40 DF and 36 HP which changed to the OP mission would have its DF reduced to 30, but its hit points would remain 36.

Upgrading a ship (with the UPGR order) increases its hit points by the same ratio as AF, DF and SF are improved (that is, +10%). There is a random event which increases this ratio to 20%; this event will also provide the same benefit to hit points, even though it won't specifically say so in the event description.

LIMITED VARIANTS

For some of the races, new ship types have been added, some of which have special limited variants. Limited variants are designated with a lowercase letter (e.g., Og instead of OG) and can only utilize *some* of the abilities of the full variant. The following limited variants can be found:

g (Limited Generic): Found on the new Heavy War Destroyer ship type, this variant can use the mission change order (MSNx) like any other mission ship, but can only access the following missions: OB (the default), OR (adds four repair), OT (adds troop bonus and the ability to carry four commandoes), OV (adds the ability to carry four fighters), and OL (adds the ability to carry 12 heavy drones). Changing out of the OB mission costs the ship 4 AF, not 10 as with a standard generic ship.

m (Limited Minesweeper): Found on Police Flagships, the little m provides the ability to move safely through OM (Old Minefield) terrain, but does NOT allow the ship to utilize the OSWPx minesweeping order. Any attempt to use the SWPx order will fail.

s (Limited Scout): Also appears on Police Flagships. Limited Scout allows the ship to use the SCAN SHIPS order, but no other type of scan so scanning for terrain, cloak, etc. is not possible with these ships. If the ship has a crew of 5 or better, it will be able to see the quantity of uncloaked ships in each hex of the sector scanned, just as a normal scout would.

h (Limited Hospital): Used by Fast Resupply Ships to replace lost crew. Ships with a lowercase h do not have hospital facilities, so they cannot avoid the debilitating effects of radiation zones and similar terrain (as well as certain monsters). However, they can use the CURE order to replace crew losses, as a hospital ship would. This order is not available if the h-ship does not have at least a crew of 3. It CAN cure itself (so long as its crew is 3 or more) by issuing a CURE order.

Q-SHIPS

There are two new civilian ships, the small and large Q-ships (SQ and LQ, respectively). These are fake freighters. On the owning player's ship list, they will appear as OSQ and OLQ, but whenever an enemy sees them (in a battle report, with a Scan Fleet order, etc.), they will always be listed as OFAS and OFAL respectively. In addition, the Q-ships appear to have the defense factors of freighters whenever they come under attack, but once the battle begins, their true combat factors will come into play. Thus, a 12-AF POL might attack a lowly 10-DF freighter, only to find

itself engaging a 20-DF Q-ship and the battle report would still show it as a C-FAS! This kind of trickery will likely be more useful in a Historical Game, but is available in any SFW variant.

SELTORIANS (race letter S)

The Seltorians are now available for general purchase. You can declare them as a primary race, and can buy them when they become available (although their first ship does not appear until Y182, meaning they will show up only late in the game or during Otimeshift variants). There is no longer a Seltorian Tribunal NPC race. Note that the Hive Ship is now a specialty ship!

JINDARIANS (race letter J)

This is a new race which will replace the Seltorian NPCs, and is available for purchase during one specific game turn (on the same turn the Seltorians used to be available). Jindarians are a very old race which operates ships carved out of asteroids (plus a few standard ship designs). They are powerful, but slow, and make excellent defenders or damage-absorbers, providing more HPs per EP than any other ship in the game.

Jindarian ships have the following special abilities:

Asteroid immunity: Jindarians are not affected by asteroid damage, either during movement or in battle.

Asteroid invisibility: While located in an AF terrain, Jindarian ships cannot be seen on scans of ANY type, including cloak scans. This ability is not true cloaking and requires no order to activate, though it will be listed as OCloak:ON on your Ship List. If attacked in asteroids, they receive the same combat bonus (+25%) that a cloaked Romulan ship would receive if attacked while cloaked.

Prospecting bonus: Jindarians are adept at prospecting asteroids. When a Jindarian prospects an AF hex, it returns a bonus of 33% extra ores (calculated after all other bonuses are added). A crew-5 Jindarian ship which prospects a 100-EP AF would thus receive a base 120 EPs plus a further 40 OR as a bonus. This is cumulative with crew and Prime Team benefits.

When upgraded, Jindarians gain the same benefits as Gorns and Seltorians (i.e., an improved commando capacity).

The Jindarian NPC race will move like any other NPC race, but if they pass through an AF hex, they will stop in that hex and prospect it on the following turn, removing that hex's EPs. Thus, wild sectors which contain Jindarians will not be as prospectable as other wild sectors. (Note: In SFB, Jindarians can build ships out of hollowed asteroids. Jindarians in SFW will not do this.)

THE FRAX AS A STANDARD RACE

Should we make the Frax a standard race, available for purchase at any time? This was one of the toughest decisions we had to make when putting together the new Ship List. One thing we were very concerned with was the automatic crew level 5 of the Frax ships. This is very powerful, as Frax fans well know, and in fact is too good a deal unless the basic stats of the Frax ships are lowered, something no one wanted. Various alternatives were proposed, including one which was very nearly accepted. In this compromise, Frax ships begin at crew level 5, but cannot be trained (with the TRNG order) due to their computerized nature. Instead, the computers learn from battle in a set amount of time none battle to earn crew level 6, two for level 7, four for level 8 and eight for level 9. (Another suggestion, not letting the Frax prospect, was rejected as it solved only half the problem.)

In the end, however, the decision was made NOT to make the Frax a regular race at this time. The crew level was part of it, but more importantly, the Frax aren't real in SFB. Making them appear real in Warlord would not be a good idea, so for now they stay an NPC race. However, just in case we change our minds, or set up a special Frax-available SFW variant game, we've included the year of availability for Frax ships in the new Ship List.

FREQUENT TURN ERRORS

We've been entering turns here at Agents of Gaming for over five years now, and we've had plenty of experience dealing with common errors on turns. Some of these are simple things you can avoid by simply giving your turn a once-over before mailing it. Others are habits players get into without even realizing it, or possibly without knowing they're doing something wrong.

NOT USING DITTO MARKS

This is by far the most annoying problem we see on turns, and is generally a case of simply not knowing that this sort of thing is allowed! Basically, whenever a ship is making the same moves as the ship above it, use ditto marks to indicate this. DON'T write the same moves again. The reason for this is simple. If you have a fleet of 20 ships and write the same moves 20 times, but somewhere in the midst of all those numbers ONE DIGIT is off, we here at AOG aren't very likely to see it! This leads to an error in turn processing. If, however, you used ditto marks on all the moves, the ONE different order would stick out like a sore thumb, and we'd have virtually no chance of missing it. Compare these two sets of sample orders:

Set #1 is done without ditto marks. Imagine that these were written by hand, and see if you can quickly spot the one difference:

- F-POL-1 OPolice-1O.....1113 1112 1111 1110 1010 none
- F-POL-2 OPolice-2O.....1113 1112 1111 1110 1010 none
- F-POL-3 OPolice-3O.....1113 1112 1111 1110 1011 none
- F-POL-4 OPolice-4O.....1113 1112 1111 1110 1010 none
- F-POL-5 OPolice-5O.....1113 1112 1111 1110 1010 none

OK, so you found it easily enough, but they looked alike at first glance, right? Well, how much easier is it if they look like this:

- F-POL-1 OPolice-1O.....1113 1112 1111 1110 1010 none
- F-POL-2 OPolice-2O....." " " " " none
- F-POL-3 OPolice-3O....." " " " 1011 none
- F-POL-4 OPolice-4O....." " " " 1010 none
- F-POL-5 OPolice-5O....." " " " " none

The beauty of this is that writing your turn like this is MUCH easier for YOU, the player! Instead of writing all those digits, you just use quick and easy ditto marks. You can even use arrows or vertical lines to indicate the same thing. As long as it's clear what you mean, we won't have a problem with it.

Please note that you CAN ditto a special order like TRNG or REPR, and please do so whenever applicable.

Warlord's Aide users should note that the Aide will do ditto-marking automatically! You should enter hex numbers normally when using that program.

IMPROPERLY FORMATTED ORDERS

We get these all the time, but the most frequent ones are as follows:

PS order: ALWAYS list the race letter first, followed by the ship designation, then the maximum price, then CLOAK if applicable, then the warp gate location, and lastly the name. Don't put CLOAK or the max price AFTER the warp gate.

TE order: ALWAYS write the quantity of resources first, then the resource type to trade, and finally the resource type you want, e.g., OTE 500 OR PE. DON'T mix them up. If you write OTE OR PE 500 or OTE OR 500 PE then the order might fail.

TC order: ALWAYS write the amount of resources first, the type of resources second and the Corp# to trade to last, e.g., OTC 300 DC 155. If you mix them up, the order will fail. For example, if you write OTC FP 250 300, does that mean trade 250 FP to Corp#300, or trade 300 FP to Corp#250?

BO order: ALWAYS write the NUMBER OF ORDERS you are buying, NOT the amount to spend on them. If you write BO 60, expecting to pay 60 EPs for 5 orders, you are going to buy 10 orders for 100 EPs. Also, PLEASE BE CAREFUL WHEN WRITING OBOO and OBD as they often

look very similar. If we see OBD 100 and the ODO looks kind of like an OOO, odds are we're going to think you are buying orders because 10 drones is a very small number to waste an order on. Likewise, if you write OBO 1000 and the OOO resembles a OD, you are going to get 100 drones. Don't make us guess at what you mean! Write clearly and use the correct order format.

HEAL: There is NO SUCH ORDER as OHEAL. We see this non-order CONSTANTLY. There are two possibilities: (1) the player means to do a CURE order, or (2) the player is trying to restore the crew on the ship issuing the order. We ALWAYS assume option #1 and enter CURE (and the Warlord's Aide will do the same thing).

SC, SJ, SP: These Starbase Orders REQUIRE a site designation or they won't work. We get a lot of turns where players just write OSCO or OSPO without a site and assume that their Home Office will be selected. This isn't the case. Any such order will fail.

SHIP MOVEMENT TIMING

If you have one ship which wishes to use a feature offered by another (such as a repair ship or hospital ship), getting the orders to work properly is a matter of timing. The important thing to remember is that OLDEST SHIPS MOVE FIRST. Let's illustrate this with an example. If a repair ship is in hex 0101 and the ship needing repairs is in 0102, what would happen if the repair ship issued an order to move to 0102 on Pulse #1 while the damaged ship issued REPR? The answer is that if the repair ship was older, it would move first and be in 0102 when REPR was issued. But if the repair ship was newer, the REPR would fail.

If two ships are the same age, the order in which the ships were bought determines their age (ships bought first are older than ships bought later).

CLOAKING

If a ship is already cloaked, and isn't moving/scanning during the turn, there is no reason to write CLOAK again.

If you issue the CLOAK order and then move to another hex, you are completely wasting your time. This gains you no benefit other than wasting a hex of movement.

You do not have to write CLOAK in the last slot for your ship, as long as you write it after the last movement order. A Romulan K5R which isn't moving but wishes to cloak can write CLOAK in its first pulse of movement, not its fifth.

STARBASE ORDERS COSTING MULTIPLE SLOTS

The Scan Fleet (SF) order takes two slots to issue, and the Scan Extended (SX) order takes three. However, you do NOT have to write the SF order twice, or the SX order three times! Just write the order ONCE. You can even fill in other Starbase Orders in the empty slots in case the SF/SX order fails to work for some reason. If you write the SF/SX order multiple times, there is a significant chance it will actually be executed multiple times, utterly wasting order slots.

BE CAREFUL WHEN...

- ...writing OBO, which often looks like OBD.
- ...writing the race letter OO, which often looks like the letter OD.
- ...writing the race letters OT or OI when faxing in your turn, as the bottom line of the OI often merges with the underlining and causes us to confuse it with a OT, or vice versa.
- ...changing to mission OI, which can be misread as OT or OL for the same reason.
- ...assigning a Science Officer to a site, as the OSO often resembles a OS and if written as such will fail.
- ...faxing in your turn, because fax-ins are frequently difficult to read. Be wary of doing your faxed-in turn in pencil, unless you use a dark lead. Watch your fax machine carefully to make sure it doesn't pull two pages through at once or make some other error. And by all means, make sure you're putting your pages through facing the right direction!

UPCOMING GAME ANNOUNCEMENTS

With the approach of the new Ship List, we need to make a public announcement of which upcoming games will utilize it and which won't. We are going to start three more games which use the current rules (Version 7.4) and then begin play with the new list.

GAME #44 will be an all-NPC game with no other variations. If you don't ask for any other game in particular when you send in your build form, we'll put you in this one by default. We have scheduled the start date of this game for October 28th. If not enough builds are here by that date, we'll push it back two weeks, but no further than that.

GAME #44A will be a small three-week game, also using the all-NPC format. Like Game #44, we plan to start it on October 28th. This sort of Oslo game is ideal for players in Canada or overseas who don't have easy access to fax or Email services.

GAME #45 will be a special multi-variant game which will take a while to explain. Todd Kagan, winner of Game #35, has graciously donated his free game prize to make Game #45 more interesting. There will thus be TWO prizes, one for the player with the most sectors when the game ends, and one for the player with the most sites. (As you can see from Page #1, these are not always the same person, but they could be, and if someone holds both honors they'll win *two* free games!) The game will end when someone achieves either 8 sector bonuses or 100 sites (not 7 sectors or 80 sites). This will make the game last a bit longer than normal.

In addition to this special feature, the following additional variants will be in effect:

Timeshift: The game will be timeshifted by 5 years, starting in Y170 instead of Y165. Remember this when doing your build!

No Loan: Loans are not available, but players will start with 500 EPs instead of the standard 300.

Undead: Players aren't knocked out of the game if their Home Office is captured.

Buy a Monster: Players will be allowed to buy ONE (and only one) monster during the game, at any time they choose.

Half Prospecting: The prospecting value of all hexes in the galaxy will be halved (this will also lengthen the game).

Nonstandard Pattern: An unusual, non-checkerboard pattern of player starting positions will be used.

Anonymous Corps: Players will be anonymous, meaning you won't know who is around you, unless they choose to reveal themselves.

Others: There may be a few other minor modifications which you will learn about later, but nothing critical.

If you wish to play in this game, send in a build form, but be sure to specify GAME #45 in the appropriate box (or display it prominently if you hand-write or Email your build). Remember that you can buy ships available in Y170 or before, and that you can (if you wish) buy a monster during your initial build!

We will try to start this game on November 4th.

GAME #46 will be the first game using the new Ship List. It will be a standard game with no special variations. If you wish to get into this game, send in a build form with GAME #46 displayed appropriately.

You might want to wait until you've had a chance to look over the new Ship List before sending in the build. None of the Default Build ships were changed in the revision, but a few of the other ships available in Y165 or before were modified or removed. For example, the Federation GSC+ is no longer in the game, but its E-variant ability is now included in the F-GSC (which should be more than an acceptable tradeoff).

PLEASE, WE BEG OF YOU...

Last time we released a new Ship List we had players trying to use it in the wrong game. **THE NEW LIST WILL ONLY AFFECT GAMES 46 AND BEYOND!** Please don't try to use it (or its new rules) in any game which starts before #46. Thanks!

ASK THE GALACTIC COUNCIL!

If my generic carrier reaches crew level 7 and I want to change it from mission V to mission K, what happens to the fighters if I use an integration ship for this change? To make this change the generic ship must first change out of the V mission, and the moment it does, its fighters will be sent back to your stockpiles. The ship will then change to mission K, but unless it is in the same hex as a base, or can get fighters by other means (a facilities ship, for example), it will be empty after the mission change is completed.

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