

Star Fleet Warlord News

Issue #12

The Official Newsletter of the Greater Magellanic Cloud

2nd Qtr 1996

SFW HALL OF FAME UPDATE

Game	Winner	Corporation	Victory
H2	Alliance	Team victory	Economic
H12	Coalition	Team victory	Military
H19	Alliance	Team victory	Economic
38	Jim Roberts	Imperial Muscle	80 sites
40	Richard Goranson	Miracle Starships	7 sectors
41	Ken Cole	Harsh Reality Inc.	101 sites
42	Jeff Martin	SPQR	7 sectors
36Q	John Hanna	Maim Brian	596 points
37Q	Randy Hill	Destruction Unlimited	728 points
X3	Doug Pentecost	Federation Inc.	3 sectors

Game #H2 was the longest-running SFW game of all time, lasting well over two and a half years and only 23 complete turns. With the Hydrans, Kzintis, and one Gorn dead, the Alliance played a waiting game as the Coalition slowly lost interest, taking months to send in turns. With one Klingon and one Romulan dead the Coalition felt they could not crack the lines of the remaining Alliance players (one Fed had 4 sectors bonuses, all but unheard of in a historical game) and gave up. The team of Gary Arands, Jim Thomas, Jeff Derezhinski, and Dan Stremcha was victorious.

Game #H12 was a short historical game, lasting only 13 turns. The Alliance won a moral victory early as the Hydrans snuck a fleet across the Western Lyrans' border and took them out of the game, but one Gorn fell shortly thereafter, and faced with a huge Klingon fleet on Southern Fed's border, the Alliance knew defeat was inevitable. The three-player team of Mark Historical Manó Hall, Todd Hall, and Phil Swikert won this one.

Game #H19 was another game where victory for the Alliance consisted of holding off Coalition attacks until their economy built up and the initiative swung the other way. (Historical games seem to work much as World War II did, with early advances by the aggressor eventually stalling in the face of overwhelming Allied economic strength.) The team of Jim Jongkind and Mark Hall (where have we heard that name before?) won after 15 turns.

Now on to the 'regular' games. Game #38 was a standard game with an extremely close finish. Steve Bennett of Phoenix Corp ended the game with 6 sites, needing only one more for victory, while Jim Roberts had *exactly* 80 sites, the bare minimum needed to win. One site different either way and the result might have been different!

Game #40 was another close game, with Miracle Starships (if it's a well-built ship, it's a miracle) ending things at 7 sectors and 65 sites. Three other competitors had over 60 sites and at least 4 sector bonuses: Richard Young's Korperschaft (72 sites), Todd Maslyn's Burning Bright (69 sites), and Russ Norris's Gloryroad Combine (62 sites).

Game #41 was your old-fashioned blowout, with Ken Cole far ahead of the rest of the pack. At 101 sites he had almost two and a half times as many sites as his nearest competition (Jim Wyciskalla's Corp named Harry's Morgue). This particular game was our first 'Event' variant (see last issue's description) and featured a lot of experimentation with random events, plus more than your usual amount of diplomacy and intrigue. I wish I could tell you everything that went on behind the scenes, but I've been asked not to reveal certain things as it might affect other games! Maybe someday the entire story will be told ...

Game #42, an all-wild sector game, was another close finish with Gene 'Unlucky' Malin winding up in second with 6 sector bonuses and 60 sites.

Jeff Martin, the winner, left nothing to chance by grabbing not only 7 sectors but 83 sites as well, covering both victory conditions simultaneously. The difficulty of gathering 7 sectors is illustrated well in game #40 where Ken Cole, even with 101 sites, did not have 7 sectors.

Games #36Q and #37Q were special multi-variant custom games (now referred to as 'Die Hard' games) and were designed by Jim Jongkind and Brian Tobolski. The basic idea was to put 25 veteran players on a 100-sector map with unknown victory conditions and at least 30 turns in the game. Originally only one game was scheduled, but interest was so high that a second was quickly organized. (Another game like these two is going on right now, under the name 'DH10'.) These games used an unusual victory point system to determine the winner, which combined sector bonuses, sites owned, and ship kills for a total point score. A similar system may be added to regular games at a future date.

Game #36Q was won by John Hanna with 596 victory points, narrowly defeating Jerry Morris's SpellJammers Return (543 points) and Mark Hall (469 points) which had a name that cannot be shown in print. Jeff Smith's Drunken Dragons (192 points) was the next closest, and only 3 other Corps were active at the end.

Game #37Q was won by Randy Hill, who at 728 victory points far outpaced his competition. (To achieve this score he held 166 major sites, XX sector bonuses, and scored 388 ship kills!) His closest competition was David Schroeder's Witness Relocation (529 points), Dan Sample's Adventuring Company (421 points), and Dean Gregg's unlistable Corporation name (412 points), with two other active players in the 300s.

Finally, Game #X3 was a special one-week custom game with what seemed to be a simple victory condition: three sector bonuses to win. Well, after duking it out for 40 complete turns against Frank Stringer's KNARF Corporation, Doug Pentecost finally knocked his opponent out of the game and won on the very next turn. For an 'Express' game this one lasted longer than most standard games!

RECENT GAME IMPROVEMENTS

As many of you have already noticed, we've increased the firepower of the NPC and Pirate Corporations somewhat over the past few games. Beginning with Game #46 (the same time the Revision 7.5 ship list was brought on line), the initial number of fortifications on any NPC Home Office or pirate base was increased slightly (about 50 points). Also, some of the ships that these Corporations build are set to speed zero so they don't move during the game. This means these Corps aren't going to be the pushovers you're used to anymore, so you'll need more than just a couple of cruisers to capture the typical NPC Home Office.

We also corrected a bug in the game which has existed for a while and was never reported to us. (This caught some of you by surprise when the bug was fixed, but since you were using a bug without telling us about it, you have no complaint!) This had to do with the prospecting value of Home Offices. The rules say HOs don't have any such value at the start of the game (though they can build up some if they have unsurveyed moons), but Wandering Planetoid HOs were accidentally getting set with prospecting value. This was corrected in Game #46 and will no longer appear.

IN THIS ISSUE...

This issue we'll catch you up on some of the happenings around AOG, like our new page on the World Wide Web, and a new type of SFW variant, the Die Hard game.

JUST WHAT IS A ODIE HARD GAMEO ANYWAY?

Die Hard games, or DH-games, are custom games with 25 players. They are designed for *VETERANS ONLY* and generally are open only to players who've played at least several other games in the past. Two have been played before and were big hits (games 36Q and 37Q); another (DH1) is going on right now. The rules of the typical DH game are as follows:

Players: 25 players, arranged so that no player shares a border with another.

Sectors: 100 sectors, 50 of which are wild, and 25 are NPC types. This is negotiable; in game DH1, 25 of the wild sectors are Osuper-wildO with both an NPC Home Office *and* the wild sector pirates and monsters. The Graveyard of Ships is not present.

Monsters: Standard monsters. In 36Q and 37Q the monsters were set up to be extremely vicious, a fact which players did not exactly appreciate.

Pirates and NPCs: These are defended somewhat better than normal, with at least battle stations on their bases and a few extra ships to defend themselves.

Setup: Players start with 1000 EPs but cannot request loans. Timeshifting is not a standard feature, but can be added to the game (as it was in DH1). Other settings, like DH1Os Ono primaryO and Orandom event selectionO features, are possible but are not standard DH-game components.

Specialty Ships are deactivated, so you can buy them as often as you like (they are treated as any other kind of ship). The only exception is the Seltorian Hive Ship, which remains available only once during the game.

Buy Extended is available. This is a special order, BX, which can only be issued after a BO 10 or BO PERM. It allows you to buy 10 more orders (that is, orders 21-30) for a cost of 200 EPs. Thus, if you wanted to use 30 orders in a turn, you could issue BO 10 (100 EPs) for orders 11-20 and then BX (200 more EPs for a total of 300) for orders 21-30. *This order is not available in any other game. Anyone trying to use it in anything but a DH-game will be wasting their time.*

Frax and Seltorians are available three times during the game each, the Frax in Y176, Y187 and Y198, and the Seltorians in Y178, Y189, and Y200. *Note that this works only in DH-games; the two extra purchase opportunities do not appear in standard games.*

The CUSS, a new race, are available only in DH-games and are described after this article. Like Frax and Seltorians, they can only be bought at certain times during the game. In a DH-game, they are available only during Y174, Y185, and Y196. *Do not try to buy CUSS ships in any game other than a DH-game.*

Free Fighters and Free PFs are available as special orders (FF and FP, respectively). The cost for these are 2500 EPs for FF and 4000 for FP, and they are available in Y184 (FF) and Y186 (FP). They work exactly like the other Ofree itemO orders do, filling up any ship bought with a load of fighters or PFs as appropriate, but not replacing battle losses. *These orders are not available in non-DH games. Players trying to use them will waste everyoneOs time and will be reprimanded.*

XFIT is available as a special ship order. This is something of a super-advanced refit/upgrade combination, increasing a shipOs speed by 1 (but not above 6) and adding 20% to AF, DF, SF, and HP. The cost is 50% of the shipOs base cost, is paid in EPs, and is not available until Y189. A ship must have an age of at least 10 turns before this order can be used. All improvements are cumulative with REFIT and UPGR orders. *This order is only available in DH-games. Use it in other games at your peril.*

Game Length is set to at least 30 turns, with the GM determining this in advance. This information is kept in a sealed jar on Funk & WagnallOs porch, and no one will know the end of game turn except the GM. It will be announced one turn before the game actually ends. *The GM reserves the right to reduce the end of game conditions to Turn #30 or even sooner if a winner is so plainly obvious that continuing the game is a waste of*

everyoneOs time and the playersO money.

Victory Conditions are defined using a point scale. Players receive points according to this chart:

Each normal major site owned	1 point
Each Home Office site owned	3 points
Each three minor sites owned	1 point
Each sector bonus	10 points
Each ship kill	1 point

A Oship killO is defined as one enemy ship destroyed. This can be scored by either attacking an opponent, or killing enemy ships as they attack you. Bases, decoys, and logistics bases do not count as kills, but monsters, NPCs, pirates, and dead CorpsO ships do count. Because of this, it is recommended that players who are dropping out send in one final turn in which they scrap all their ships (especially near the end of the game), except those which guard sites, in order to deny their opponents easy kills.

At the end of the game (after the final turn has completed), the player with the most victory points wins. Although DH-games are not full-sized games, they last longer and so a free game prize will be awarded.

Game Size Limitations: The game computers were not designed to handle Corporations of the size which appear in such games (which is why normal games usually end around Turn #20). Therefore, there is a ship cap of 200 ships, not including decoys and logistics bases (but including WGOs). In addition, *unless you use the WarlordOs Aide to send in your turns electronically*, you will be charged an extra \$1 per page after the third page of moves/orders. This is in addition to other fees like fax-in costs. We regret having to include both these limitations in any game, but considering that Corps in 36Q and 37Q routinely sent in 5- and 6-page (and, at the end, 7-page) turns which took 15 minutes to enter, 10 minutes to run, and force us to turn off the network or face a computer crash, there is no other choice!

A DIE HARD RACE: THE CUSS

The CUSS, or Conglomerate of Unique and Special Species, was originally designed by Tom Gondolfi and later modified for use in SFW. ***THIS RACE EXISTS ONLY IN DH-GAMES AND CANNOT BE PURCHASED IN ANY OTHER GAME.***

The CUSS uses the race letter OQO and has the following ships:

Q-DN: EP 225, AF 80, DF 80, HP 80, SF 50, speed 3.

Q-CA: EP 150, AF 50, DF 50, HP 50, SF 30, speed 4.

Q-CL: EP 125, AF 40, DF 40, HP 40, SF 25, speed 4.

Q-DD: EP 100, AF 30, DF 30, HP 30, SF 20, speed 5.

Q-FF: EP 70, AF 20, DF 20, HP 20, SF 15, speed 5.

Although they appear to have only five ships, the actual number of ships is unlimited, because with any purchase you can specify up to two variant letters (A-Z, not * or &) as part of the ship class. For example, to buy a destroyer with carrier and PF capabilities, purchase a Q-DDPV (the order of the two letters doesnOt matter). Note, however, that regardless of what variant letters are selected, the *base hull* determines any supply and demand penalties (so if you buy a CAXY and a CABG, you are buying two CAs, so the second one will have to pay the second-purchase extended supply and demand penalty).

Ships can have the same variant letter, e.g., a DNBB. However, most static abilities work only once, so adding a second does not provide any additional benefit. For example, having Aegis on a ship gives it a 25% DF bonus when defending a site, but having it a second time does not give it a 50% bonus. In other words, ships cannot have Odouble Aegis.O The same goes for other similar abilities, like scout, hospital, generic, etc.

Each variant you add increases the price of a ship by a percentage amount (of the base price) as shown in the list of CUSS variants on the next page.

CUSS Ship Variants

- A (+20%): Adds 25% to ship's base DF and gives Aegis bonus.
 B (+10%): Adds 25% to ship's base AF.
 C (+15%): Adds a cloaking device. If you buy this variant twice, e.g. a DDCC, the ship has a Darkfield Generator (permanent cloak) and does not need to use the CLOAK order.
 D (10%): Adds 25% to ship's base DF.
 E (20%): -10% to ship's base AF, adds Exploration ability.
 F (50%): -25% to ship's base AF, adds Facilities ability (which includes Integration ability).
 G (50%): +25% to ship's base AF, adds Generic ability. Buying this ability twice does NOT give a second mission.
 H (10%): -25% to ship's base AF, adds Hospital ability.
 I (20%): -10% to ship's base AF, adds Integration ability.
 J (25%): Adds displacement device.
 K (25%): Adds fighters: FF 4, DD 6, CL/CA/DN 12, and strike bonus. Buying ÖKÖ twice is unnecessary; use ÖKVÖ for maximum strike carrier abilities.
 L (20%): Adds drones: FF 8, DD 12, CL 16, CA/DN 24, and bombardment bonus.
 M (20%): Adds TBs: FF/DD 4, CL/CA 6, DN 10, and minesweeping ability.
 N (40%): Adds notification ability (which includes survey ability); cannot be combined with ÖNÖ or ÖYÖ.
 O (-50%): -50% to ship's base AF/DF/SF/HP, speed drops to 1. Cannot be combined with ÖXÖ.
 P (25%): Adds PFs: FF 2, DD 4, CL/CA/DN 6. Does NOT add scout ability.
 Q (15%): +10% to ship's base DF and adds stasis field generator.
 R (20%): Adds repair: FF 4, DD 6, CL 8, CA/DN 10.
 S (20%): -25% to ship's base AF and adds scout ability. Cannot be combined with ÖSÖ or ÖZÖ.
 T (20%): Adds commandoes: FF 3, DD 4, CL 6, CA/DN 8, and troop bonus when attacking sites.
 U (20%): +10% to ship's base SF and adds maunder ability.
 V (20%): Adds fighters: FF 4, DD 6, CL/CA/DN 12.
 W (15%): +10% to ship's base AF and adds web caster.
 X (75%): +25% to ship's base AF/DF/SF/HP, +1 speed, adds minesweeping ability, +2 TBs. Can be purchased only ONCE per ship and cannot be combined with ÖOO.
 Y (20%): -25% to ship's base AF and adds survey ability. Cannot be combined with ÖNÖ or ÖYÖ.
 Z (35%): -25% to ship's base AF and adds heavy scout ability (which includes scout ability); cannot be combined with ÖSÖ or ÖZÖ.

There is no CUSS variant available for any of the following: specialty ships, penal ships, ability to carry satellite ships (or act as a satellite ship), ability to act as a Warp Gate, or anything else not listed above.

To figure the cost of the ship, add together the percentages and multiply by the base cost. Then multiply in any multiple-buy penalties. For example, a Q-DDXP (base cost 100) is purchased as the second CUSS DD that turn. The cost of ÖXÖ is 75%, the cost of ÖPÖ is 25% and the double-buy penalty is 15%. You would first increase the base 100 EPs by (75%+25% =100% to a total of 200, then add in the 15% for a total of 230 (a pricey little destroyer). Obviously you will want to avoid these double-purchase penalties at all costs!

Some of the more common variant combinations are KP (fighters and PFsÑand don't forget the ace pilot), YZ (for obvious reasons), IG (able to change its own mission), and X plus just about anything (except another X, which is illegal).

The CUSS are the ultimate special-purpose race in the game, and are really *too* good for regular games. Keep in mind that they appear only in DH-games, and don't try buying them otherwise. (Of course, if you are creating your own custom game for yourself or a group, you can specify CUSS as a game option. Just ask AOG for details.)

ASK THE GALACTIC COUNCIL!

Q. I've noticed that in some games it is possible to buy a monster. How does this work?

A. In some games (usually ones without other weird variations) we turn on the Öbuy a monsterÖ flag just to spice things up a bit. If this is done, you'll see a note about it during Y166. If you don't see a note, you can't buy a monster. If you can buy one, you can only get ONE, although you can purchase it any time you like. Most players choose either Replicators (which they then duplicate later on) or Sun Snakes (to prospect supernova hexes).

Q. Exactly how does a Replicator (or Gerrymander) duplicate itself?

A. These two monster types can ÖcopyÖ themselves later in the game. They must have achieved an age of 8 turns. At this time, they can use the DUP order, which is a one-pulse (not full-turn) ship order. The cost is 150 food for Replicators and 125 food for Gerrymanders. This order is for player-owned REP and GER monsters only; the computerized Nasty Space Monsters don't use it. Note that the DUP order will be explained to you when you buy that appropriate monster, just in case you forget where you saw this description.

Q. I've heard that there is a new kind of terrain in the game, but I don't seem to see it anywhere. What is it and where is it usually found?

A. You're thinking of the Academy Center (AC) minor site. This appears only in wild sectors (or the Graveyard of Ships) and only in games where the ÖAC terrainÖ flag is activated (about every other game). Like the Öbuy a monsterÖ flag described above, this is something we turn on every now and then. AC was originally a test terrain for future addition in the rules, and has proven to work fine, so it'll be added in the next revision. Basically, if you control an AC, you'll get a random legendary officer at the start of your turn (during Income Phase), in addition to other officers received during Post-Turn Status Phase. You can also pick up officers from AC hexes as though an Integration Ship were present. You'll see a full description of the AC terrain type the first time you spot one on a sector scan, so watch your turn results for the complete rules.

Q. If I lose a Warp Gate due to enemy actions between turns, and then try to buy ships at that WG, what happens?

A. The ships arrive at your Home Office, unless you are in an Undead Game and don't own your HO (or a Nomad Game and don't have an HO at all), in which case the purchase order is cancelled.

Q. If I lose my Home Office, what can I do on my next turn?

A. Well, that depends.

If you take your Home Office back, you can keep playing, and can even buy ships at it (assuming you have Reversed Orders off). You can't fortify your HO on the same turn you recapture it, of course.

If you don't take it back, and are in an Undead Game, there is no effect and you can continue playing normally. You can continue buying ships at Warp Gates but if you don't specify a Warp Gate, your ship buys are cancelled (they don't go to a default Gate).

If you don't take back your HO and are in a normal game, you don't get to send in another turn because you won't get an Orders Sheet to fill out (and any attempt to send a Warlord's Aide facsimile will be rejected). On your last turn (the one that runs immediately after your opponent captured your HO), you will not be allowed to buy ships at all (even at Warp Gates), nor can you trade EPs with other Corporations (to prevent you from giving a zillion resources to an ally). If you are in a Historical Game, you may not use the EG order without your HO.

Generally, if you know you're going to lose your HO (you can usually tell by looking at the huge fleet on your scans), your choices are to try and take it back, drop out, or send in a Öspite turnÖ in which you nuke everything and fortify one site with all your EPs and nearby ships. It all depends on what kind of a player you are and how annoyed you are at your enemy!

ORIGINS NOTICE

Agents of Gaming will attend Origins on July 4, 5, 6 and 7. The office will be shut down during these days. This will have the following effects:

Turns with a day cycle such that they fall on the 4th or 5th of July will be run early. They will be processed Wednesday the 3rd after all turns scheduled for that day have been run. If your turn is scheduled for the 4th or 5th, you should get it back to us by the 3rd or it won't run until the night of the 7th (our regular guarantee is void for such turns since you are being warned in advance). Special Deal: Players whose turns are due on the 4th or 5th may fax in their turns any time before noon the 3rd and will not be charged the extra fax-in fee.

AOG's staff will return from Origins the afternoon of the 7th and will catch up at that time, running late turns before any weekend work (as usual). Fax-out services will not be available until Monday afternoon. We will not log on to our computer network accounts until Sunday evening, so don't be surprised if you don't get confirmation E-mails until then. We will be INCREDIBLY BUSY Sunday night and Monday trying to get caught up, so if you call, please keep your conversations as short as possible.

Rumor also has it that AOG will make some kind of major positive announcement at Origins, but just what that is or what it might mean isn't available for release at press time. It will be a good thing, however; we aren't quitting the business or anything. Stay tuned for further information!

UPCOMING GAME ANNOUNCEMENTS

GAME #50 will be a standard game and will start on June 22nd. This game has already been delayed twice, and WILL start on this date even if it isn't full. If you want to pick up a position in this game, let us know *immediately*.

GAME #51 will be an Òall-NPCÓ game (which we haven't run in a while) and is scheduled to begin sometime in July or early August. As soon as we get Game #50 started, we'll have more details for you on this game. Keep an eye on our web page (see below) for future updates.

GAME #DH2 will use the DH game rules described on page 2 of this newsletter (no timeshift). Want to give it a shot? We're starting it as soon as we can get 25 builds (hopefully around June 29th, or sooner if possible). This game won't start unless we have a full set of 25 players, as the wide-open layout requires 25 positions with no Òholes.Ó Note that you MUST specify ÒGame DH2Ó on your build, and since you start with an unusual setup, the default build probably won't be appropriate. Read the DH rules on pages 2 and 3 carefully.

GAME #X4 is an 8-player special one-week ÒexpressÓ game and will

start as soon as we have enough players. To participate, you must use the Warlord's Aide to send in your turn electronically (turns will be sent back by regular mail). Faxed-in turns will also be accepted. This game is played in a 4x4 all-wild galaxy and has a special victory condition: three sector bonuses wins! If you think that means the game will be short, that isn't necessarily trueÑthe last X-game lasted 40 turns!

GAME #48A, a three-week game, was unfortunately cancelled and will not be rescheduled. Three-week games were never very popular, seldom receiving more than 12 players and usually only 8 (the minimum). In this case, we had exactly 8 players but four of them worked in the same office, meaning they would immediately team up to kill the four independent players (who didn't know each other at all). Under these circumstances we didn't feel it would be right to start a game. No more three-week game builds arrived in a 3-month period. If any games are run in the future with three-week cycles, they will be custom games only.

CATCH US ON THE WEB!

Agents of Gaming now has a page on the World Wide Web! The location is: <http://members.gnn.com/agent1/aog.htm>. Follow the links to SFW to find out about upcoming games (we try to keep the page updated at least twice monthly), to send Email directly to AOG, and even to fill out an Initial Build Form online! (Note: Some servers don't support the form generation system properly. We'll confirm receipt of your build, but keep a paper copy handy.) You can also find various helpful files available for download, including the latest House Rules, the credit card authorization form, and every back issue of the Star Fleet Warlord News!

PUBLISHER'S INFORMATION

THE STAR FLEET WARLORD NEWS is published quarterly (at the end of March, June, September and December of each year) by the Agents of Gaming, and is copyright © 1996 Amarillo Design Bureau. Each issue costs \$1 (\$2 for overseas readers) except for those players currently active in any game of STAR FLEET WARLORD, who receive each issue free. Subscriptions are available at \$4 per year. Mail subscription requests and all submissions to: Agents of Gaming, P.O. Box 31571, Dayton OH 45437-0571.