Welcome back.

As a newbie to F&E (okay, played once back in 92'), I was wondering if anyone had figured out the math of when it is beneficial to go high BIR vs when to go low BIR.

Obviously if you are totally outmatched and looking to retreat, you go BIR=1. But how about other cases?

Say a force attacking a SB? Attackers have more ships waiting to join the battle line, but the defender will have a higher overall compot, fighting over a SB. Should the attacker go low BIR, taking less damage since they have more reinforcements? Or should they go high BIR, forcing the defender to take more casualties, while taking even higher casualties themselves.

Essentially, what are the opinions on when to go high vs low BIR in those ambiguous fights.

Dreissen

Good question, Dreissen. It's often a gut feeling but here a few things I consider for BIR. I'm sure others can add alot more.

I tend to go high when:

1. There a moderately big unit I want to direct on.

2. the opponent has a big backlog of attrition units and I want enough to score some on decent units. Example, opponent has 18 fighter factors in the line and 100 in reserves; I want to do a fair amount of damage beyond the fighters, possibly also to direct.

3. The defender of a homeworld assault should usually go high as to wipe out most of the opponent's line, forcing self kills (at least for the first few rounds).

I tend to go low BIR when I want to take most of hte damage on my attrition units or to protect certain units from directed damage.

When choosing both or when I'm certain what the opponent will choose, I
calculate the minimum BIR to guarantee killing or crippling the target I'm after, especially vs lone BATS. For example, if there's a unit you want to direct on and low BIR will do it, plus the opponent has more attrition units, go low to minimize damage to yourself as anything beyond the directed damage will be soaked up by fighters and such.

As a matter of personal taste, all else being equal I choose high as I'm impatient and don't like to drag things out over lots of rounds.

Being a totally non-biased player (😊), I'd say always go low - preferably picking a "1".

T

You magnify the effects of an EW shift that is in your favor by picking a low BIR.

You minimize the effects of an EW shift that is against you by picking a high BIR.

If it doesn't matter, pick high so that the game moves along more quickly.

Yes, as I can attest to....a Hydran (hopefully final) capital assault is upcoming in FOS. SHould be quite painfull with all those cruisers.

Chris:
You have no idea. Just prepare yourself to see the first battle line go bye by. And keep chanting "I'll never have to self kill that many ships ever, ever again."

I actually only lost 6 ships to the first burn....crippled 6 too, but only 6 died.

Still, I will use that mantra more today.

Still, think about that a second. You just self killed 6 ships in 1 round. Thankfully
you had mostly big ships on the line to absorb damage, and I guess the Hydran player either a) rolled low, b) the BIR went low, or c) all of the above. Nothing hurts more than seeing a Hydran roll a 6 over an untouched homeworld.

Man........we just finished.

I lost 34 ships, a gaggle of cripples.

And the Freaking homeworld is STILL THERE!!!!!!!!!!

Actually - just to clear this up - not only is the homeworld still there, but the SB does not even have a scratch, the FRD's are still there and all the Aux's, capital undevastated - 10PDU's, PAL, 3RN's and an AH bought it though. Nothing crippled and only 30 or so fighters died. On the down side we are up to about 20 shock rolls without one failure or success - anyway, you know what I mean. Sorry Chris, couldn't resist a little bit of gloating.

And the worst part is, since Hydrax is not devistated, 4 more PDUs may very well pop up and give the pain all over again. Guess I should have passed along mantra #2: "Always devastate the capital planet if you stay more than one round over it, you'll be glad later."

Geez, I can't spell deviatated

Hmm, but since there are no PDUs on it now, those PDUs would still take a turn to become active.

Ah, a little gloating is good. I've been know to do a little from time to time.

Well, the Hydran income will be all of 12 EP. for this next turn so..........

Ah, I was under the impression the capital still had 2 or 3 PDUs left on it.

Nevermind then
Sorry my bad - 14 PDU's died - 10 died last night, 4 the night before.

I know there is a lot of other stuff going on with F&E/AO but I’m going to post a couple of strategy questions I had anyway.

1) What can the Hydrans do to avoid having the Old Colonies cut off from the capital? I find it impossible to keep the connection open. Anyone have some ideas on how to at least make it harder for the Coalition?

2) What do the Feds do about the 7th Fleet SB? It seems likely (at least in my game) that this SB will be cut-off due to the Roms + Orion secession. How or why would you defend this isolated/out of the way/dangerous SB?

You could maybe blow all your money on upgrading the rear-area BATS to a SB, but it it really not worth it. There really is no way to keep the route's open and still keep the defenses you need to really hurt the Coalition if they come in. Though, if you put about 6xHN, 2 per hex, in 418 217 and 219, then you lose 1 and retreat 1 from each hex. It either ties up several Coalition ships or keeps 2 possible routes open for the OC.

If you can destroy the Lyran border BATS, and the EB starbase then it becomes so much easier.

As for the 7th Fleet......is really a matter of goals. If you want to keep the link broken between the Roms/Klinks, then try and hold. It is good to put reserves on both 2610 and 3210 so they can reach either the 7th or the 6th/3rd.

Keeping Hydran ships in 0219 and 0419 will ensure a supply path stays open to the Old Colonies. If you use a Hydran fast ship, and one FF in each of those hexes, you can then retreat into 0418 (if the minor at 0519 is in Coalition hands) from 419, and from 0219. you can retreat to 0119. Holding this hexes will keep the path open. Now if you still control 0519, you'll need to place one pair of ships in 0319 instead of 0419.

Use fast ships, because the Lyrans have a lack of them (usually), and if they do not use a fast ship to counter yours in that hex, you can withdraw the FF first, and the fast ship second, ensuring you loose no ships in the process.

1. It can't be done. Abandon the capital along with all hope.

2. Abandon it.
Bummer. 😔

What do you expect when you ask the enemy for tactical advice? I forgot....

#3. Surrender as quickly as possible.

heheh

HI JOHN

1. You can't keep the supply line open until they transfer more ships to the fed front. You can use the orions to transfer EPs. But remember it will cost you 1/2 of the eps sent.
2. You should build an extra SB over earth. Maybe 2. The mudside option needs to take the fed captiol hex. with 2 or 3 SBs over earth it will be very costly.

never mind that with all that EP invested in bases the feds will have a smaller fleet and be cut off from their offmap income, allowing the coalition to go after the smaller capitols with an even larger fleet

DL:
Did you ever consider that if Earth falls the Fed capital income & builds are gone also? 😊

John

The fed capital hex already has 3 SBs.... I guess if I was really worried, I'd stack MBs up on the capital, maybe as many a 8. They'd effectively win the EW war for me, and the coalition can only take out one per round. Better still, I can move them later if I want to. They certainly are a better investment than PDUs if you have the time.

Dave

you can't move MB once they are setup, and until they are setup they have no effect.
don't forget the extra 4 EW from the PDUs

as far as the risk of earth falling, if you have been building your fleet and earth is still at risk of falling then the game is lost, and trading in a bunch of ships for a few more SB won't help you

remember a capitol doesn't fall by destroying the SB/PDUs, or even by devastating the planets, it falls by driving the defending fleet away.

if the coalition is really making a serious drive at earth, the thing to do is to maximize the ship production so that you can have large fleets to defend each planet, add the PDU/base compot to the fleet compot in several places and you will do far more damage then just adding a couple bases

and then after the invasion fails you will be able to take those same ships and go on the offensive

Check (510.4)

The MB can be moved, but it takes a tug a full turn to put it back into its packed up state.

Every time I see the title of this game I get a good laugh. It eases my day. Keep it going.

Which title is that?

Argh, somehow hit the wrong topic. Bad Maulers.

The Feds can build their entire ship production on turn 7,8, and 9 and can afford at least 1 extra SB on earth.

Chris hit on the answer. Kill the 2 bats and the EB SB on turn 3-6.
Without these bases its very hard for the Lyrans to cut off the old colonys.

John, doing that presupposes the Lyrans won't have moved enough mass into their southern border to prevent it. There is a tradeoff in their doing this as it will mean weaker attacks on the Kzinti for Turns 3-6.

Okay gang, I have a mess of a battle coming up in the game Larry and I just started and I would like some opinions on how to procede.

We are playing The Tempest with the following modifications. Spec Ops, Marine Assualt, Carrier War and Advanced Ops rules added. All ships that were added to the OOB from the expansions were added to the available fleets. No Admirals.

I hit the Fed 3rd Fleet Starbase (2211), with the whole 3rd fleet 1xDN, 1xDNL, 1xCC, 1x 3CVB, 1x3CVS, 3xCA, 1xCF, 3xCL, 1xCMC, 3xNCL, 3xDD, 9xF5, 1xTG, 1xSC, 1xF5S, 1xSAV, 1xFRD 2xPrime Teams, with the following Klingon fleet.

2xC8, 2xC5, 2xD7C, 3xFD7, 1xTGA, 1x3CVT, 5xD7
7xD6, 15xD5, 1xD7A, 1xD6M, 3xD6G, 2xD6D, 1xD6J
2x2FV, 2xF5S, 1xF5L, 8xF5Q, 2xPrime Teams

I have already dropped the 2 nearby BATS (2010 and 2012) and the Neutral Zone Planet (1910). I would really like the SB to fall as I think that this turn is the best chance to drop the SB cheaply, as he was not able to reinforce it at all. Total compot is somewhere on the order of 250 Fed to 475 Klingon. How you best go at dismantling the Feds?

First, decide just how much you're willing to lose to do it (as in destroyed)...

Then continue until the base is destroyed or you've lose those ships...

Trash his DN if you can to reduce his line. What POD does his tug have? If it’s a Battle Pod, it may not be worth hitting the DN.

Be prepared to give up F5Qs as kills to keep your better ships on the line.

Use carriers for approach battles to keep from wasting your line ships.

Take Stewarts advice first and foremost. Figure out what you're willing to spend and go no further than that.
Oh, and only use the D7A in approach battles. It's toast against the base no matter what, but might (not likely, but possible) survive an approach battle.

I know I must decide what I'm willing to give up. I think that I am willing to trade a sizeable number of F5Q to get it done. The TG is pulling the FRD so no pod to worry about. The DN isn't much to be feared as he has the SB as a command ship. I don't think that he will accept offered approach battles as he only has 18 fighters in the hex and without the base our battleline will be approximately equal and I have more staying power. Would you fight away from the base?

All that being said I think that the best route might be to load my battleline with cruisers and a battlegroup cripple/kill F5Q as necessary and and let him spend the damage. He'll probably take some voluntary SIDS and cripple FF's or or DD's. I don't think he has anything worth directing on except the TG which I'll never see and maybe the fast ships.

Direct on the DN because it's an extra ship. The SB is going to be there no matter what, so he gets an extra 10 compot by having the DN as his flag ship. His choices are to have the SB as his Flagship with 10 ships or to have the DN as his flag ship with 10 ships and a SB.

Ten compot adds up after a few battle rounds (2.5 damage on average per round at a BIR of 5 IIRC).

Also, don't waste a DD on the FRD. You can kill it in pursuit, along with the Tug.

10 compot does add up, but giving up the 31 damage needed to kill it also gives up probably means one round of extra damage that you will take at the SB. I would save the stasis ship for combat somewhere else, and keep it in reserve to make him think you will use it later(you might in pursuit).

You will be at a significant EW shift in this battle. He has 33 ships and you have about 60. If you stand at the SB and your comparative compots are 110:160, and you average 25% damage each, you will get 27 damage a round(4 crippled Fed hulls), and he will score 40 damage(6 crippled hulls). Assuming this relationship holds true he will be out of ships in 8 rounds(more because of self SIDS, but he will not have a full battle line after crippling 20 ships or 5 rounds). This is about the same time that you would SIDS the base out from under him if you did 1 SIDS step a round. I would let the damage fall the first 2 or 3 rounds. If he takes significant SIDS steps to the base, I would move in some D6G's and get some use out of the marines combined with a mauler to do an additional SIDS.
The first few rounds I would put up your best line (hold mauler, and stasis), and cripple your weakest ships in the line. After 5 round you will have crippled 30 of your ships and 20 of his, if neither player directs. I would probably burn command points as the Klingon here. This is the kind of assault you have been saving them for! Your opponent will take an additional 4 damage a round which will knock an additional ship off the line every other round. It will also allow greater flexibility in what you can cripple.

Almost everybody else here has more experience than me, so take this with a grain of salt.

My first inclination is always to let damage fall, that said, if he accepts approach throw everything at him, including stasis and a mauler, and kill some ships. He should not accept. You should offer every round.

Pick a high BIR, he probably has better EW than you after all.

At the SB, put the Mauler on line, but use it to maul ONLY if he puts up the DN or self SIDS the SB to where you can cripple it easily (the D6M is a 10 ComPot ship if not mauling, and if he wants to direct that is fine also). You have almost twice his ComPot, and he should not be inflicting twice the damage he takes, for the first few rounds I would not self kill unless it is the only way to avoid crippling something valuable. You can have a 3D5,F5Q battlegroup crippled five times, if after this has happened things are not going well self kill the remaining 3F5Q over the next three rounds.

If you are short on repair then selfkills look a lot better, a ship you will never repair absorbs less damage and generates no salvage.

I agree with Douglas on his mauler comments. And you only have to cripple the DN if all you want to do is drive it off the line.

If you are THAT worried about driving COMPOT off the line.

Mauling+Destroying a Fed DN=31
Mauling+Crippling a Fed 3CVB=28

Fed DN lets you get an extra ship on the line. The CVB doesn't. Hitting the DN takes two ships off the line. The CVB will just be replaced.
Of course, if by some miracle you have the points to kill a 3CVB, do so.

But you only hit the DN if he sticks it out there. Wait for a mistake by your opponent.

Killing the DN, will take 1 ship off the line, the CR10 ship. The CR10 SB will still be there.

It looks like the Feds will have a EW advantage at the start of the Battle. The Klingons only have two EW2 ships (D6D) and two EW1 ships (F5S). Unless they put one (or more) of those Scouts on the line, they'll be shooting into a -1 shift. A few rounds of that, coupled with the extra damage the SB is doing, will hurt.

Of course if they can do 30 damage they can direct and kill the SC, but that will buy the SB at least one more round of life.

Remember, that the DN and SC only need to be crippled to make them mission killed and useless. That means 30 damage (only 16 with a Mauler) to take the DN off the line and 21 damage to take the SC out of the Scout Box. Of course, since the Federation should retreat behind the almost destroyed SB, you wont get a chance to kill them during pursuit, so you'll have to face them again someday. But that may be the price of reducing your own losses.

Also remember that the CMC can provide marine support to the SB from the Support Line (latest errata) and that the SB has one G to be used against any Marine attacks from the D6Gs.

True, but the CMC can also be targeted if it going to come down to a G fight.

Wow everyone, thanks for the great advice.

First off I don't think I'll have a chance to pursue, he'll probably retreat behind the starbase.

The other thing you must know about my opponent is that he HATES maulers. He will destroy one in the battle line...always! The only thing he'd direct on (which he seldom does) in lieu of a mauler is an SAF (that comes in the battle after this, Kzinti homeworld). So if I put the mauler in the line it will die.

I never thought about the fact that the DN commanding is different than the SB.
Good reason to knock it out, even if its just crippling it.

Bill good point on the command points. I think I'll burn one, I need another for the Kzinti HW.

One thing I was thinking about directing on is the FRD. If he retreats from the SB he gets away with the FRD and will be sitting on a repair facility. I'd like him not to be able to repair the cripples he's going to take. If he loses the FRD he has to retreat all the way to 2808 or 2915 to effect repairs.

ChrisF.

The rules is that Marine Ships for the DEFENDER, can support defensive operations from the Support Line (Like DB ships)

So to cream the CMC, it's at 3-1, or 27 damage to smoke.

The FRD under tow is a slow unit. You will get a shot at it during retreat, assuming you hold the hex. Bases do not "cover" the retreat of slow units, so you'll likely get to kill it, unless there are other high-priority slow targets (such as LAVs).

If you had surrounded the base with frigates during op move, then all of the slow units there would die, without even fighting the slow unit battle (I'm hoping to get this changed - If I don't I'll write a tac note).

Yeah, do not go after the FRD. You can kill it on slow pursuit, as John said. With a little luck, you can nail the tug hauling it too.

cool....didn't realise that the Base wouldn't cover the slow stuff....there is an SAV there as well

well, the units for a slow retreat will be TG,FRD and SAV, IF the defender does not resolve damage on the FRD and SAV in the battle. I would, knowing I would lose them cheap after the face anyway. Look for the SAV and FRD to go up, right before he retreats I would think.

If he hates maulers enough to direct and kill them all the time then by all means put it on the line and use it to direct on a FFE or something (or to direct on the DN if it is in action).
For him to direct the mauler out of existence costs him 28 damage that no one else needs to take, that pretty well gives you the hex if you let the rest fall. He is probably trying to run you out of maulers, which is not a bad tactic, but if you only use maulers over high value targets you should not care that he is directing on them.

By Christopher E. Fant (Cfant) On Friday, January 17, 2003 - 07:15 pm: Edit

Though, now that you get salvage for a mauler at the base 8EP rate, it does make it a little less cost effective to lose them after one use.

By Robert Padilla (Zargan) On Friday, January 17, 2003 - 11:44 pm: Edit

There was a time when salvage for maulers was based on it's actual 10 EP cost? Were they considered a base hull?

As a side note, the Romulan Falcon Mauler probably should be a base hull. At least I don't think it's even close to the same hull as a War Eagle.

By David Lang (Dlang) On Saturday, January 18, 2003 - 07:17 am: Edit

if you know he will direct on the mauler then put up the highest compot line you can muster, with both D6D's on the line for EW pick BIR 4 and make him pay for it

you will loose the mauler, but you will do a very significant amount of damage to him in the process. and if he will direct on the mauler anyway then it's a one use ship so use it where you get the most advantage from it.

this is why you want to avoid 'always' doing something from reflex and watch out for people assuming that you will do something. in this case if he doesn't direct and lets the damage fall then you will have to cripple a lot of valuable ships. if he does this a couple times then you will have to stop assuming that he will direct and start putting more padding in the fleets with maulers, making you less effective (and then he can direct on the mauler to get rid of that blasted thing 😊)

By Todd Lovas (Qwerty) On Monday, January 27, 2003 - 11:50 pm: Edit

OKay got a great response last time so here is the other big battle. Turn 7 of Tempest. Going into the Kzinti Homeworld. And the sides look like this.

Kzinti
Kzinti Capital: SB, 12xPDU
Kzn Fleet: 2xDN, DNL, 2xCC, 9xBC, BCF, 5x3CV, 4x3CVL, TgCV, TgTV, 4x2CVE, 10xCN, 10xFF, DDV, 3xFCR, CLG, CD, SDF, 2xSF 4xDF, 2xFFG, 2xLAV, 3xSAV, FTL, 2xF0S, LAS, SAS

Klingon
C8, 2xD7C, 6xD7, 3xD6, 12xD5, 3xF5L, 9xF5, 3xE4, 2xD6M, 5xD6D, 2xD5S,
2xF5S, DVS grp, D6V grp, D5V grp, 3x2FV

Lyran
2xDN, DNL, 2xBC, STT, 5xCA, 2xCF, 3xCL, 6xCW, 6xDW, 6xDD, 2xFF, CWG, 4xDDG, 2xSC, SAF

Coalition objective is to remove all the PDU's from the capital planet with minimum losses. This allows a follow-up attack next turn with no PDU's and the possibility of dropping the SB. I've never used a SAF before and I am afraid of the BIR of 4. What is the best way of dropping this capital with minimum losses.

We are playing this and the Fed SB battle Tuesday night. I'll let you know how things turned out.

By Stewart W Frazier (Frazikar) on Tuesday, January 28, 2003 - 12:20 am: Edit

"What is the best way of dropping this capital with minimum losses."

There is no 'best way' to drop a capital with minimum losses, you just drop the capital with whatever losses your get (otherwise you DON'T drop the capital)...

First, take a hard look for your objective, then determine what you're willing to lose to obtain that objective, then fight until you have gotten the objective or lost your limit (and if you haven't got your objective at that time, take another look to see how close you are and if it will take one or two combat round to get it).

Will it be bloody, probably, capital assaults are not for the faint of heart...

By Christopher E. Fant (Cfant) on Tuesday, January 28, 2003 - 12:42 am: Edit

And do not ingest large amounts of liquor before beginning......though a little bit will take the edge off the first 2 lines vaporizing.

By Ahmad Abdel-Hameed (Madarab) on Tuesday, January 28, 2003 - 04:11 am: Edit

Todd, where are the Klingon BTs? Or any of the other Klingon or Lyran tugs? Without them, the Klingons look awfully starved for command ships and will have to rely upon the Lyrans for flagships and the subsequent requirement that most of the force be composed of Lyran ships. You've also only got 3 maulers which will limit the Coalition's capacity to kill PDUs cheaply. The Coalition also doesn't have much in the way of scouts which will mean they'll be fighting under penalties the whole time. My advice for the Coalition (as the Alliance really doesn't have that much in the way of choices) is to attack and devastate the outlying planets and systems and then come back next turn with a bigger fleet to deal with the capital planet itself.

By Todd Lovas (Qwerty) on Tuesday, January 28, 2003 - 06:08 am: Edit

I know I am suffering from a lack of Tugs. The Tempest starts with very few tugs and I need them from for FRD's and Bases this turn. And the EW conditions are
brutal. With the Tempest start the only 2 EW scouts the Coalition has are the D6D and Lyran Sc. I have always felt that the all the "EW Fixes" for the Alliance were WAY over the top.

I figure no sense in waiting, that the first battle line must include the SAF. Its the best chance to kill a big chunk of PDU's. The SAF and a Mauler and then basically anything else I can afford to have die.

By Robert Padilla (Zargan) on Tuesday, January 28, 2003 - 12:34 pm: Edit

There is one other issue. Successful SAF attack + PDUs mauled dead = a helluva lot of minus points for the Zin. I’d say if you get lucky with the SAF (get 3 or 4 PDU), and can maul 4 PDUs, be happy with that and don't come back to the capital planet.

And Chris, remember these are Kzinti, not Hydrans, so entire lines shouldn't just vaporize. A big beefy line of 130 or so COMPOT should be able to take a round over the Zin Capital without losing a single ship. Now pursuit is another matter, but....

By Daniel G. Knipfer (Dgknipfer) on Tuesday, January 28, 2003 - 04:05 pm: Edit

Todd, you can move FRDs around with two size class 3 ships (unless the rules changed). Let 2xD5 move the FRD. The Klingons need to have their tugs with a BP and a VP to get the command rating that they need. A CR10 ship is more important at a capital assault than 2xD5.

By Edward Reece (Edfactor) on Tuesday, January 28, 2003 - 04:56 pm: Edit

My advice is to come in the first round and pick a 1, use the mauler to strip off 3 PDU's.

Then stick in 1 or 2 ground attack ships the SAF and a mauler with as big a battline as possible. Pick a 4; maul 4 PDU's send the SAF at the planet and hope your G's get another one or two.

With luck you can get the PDU's in 2 rounds and leave the Kzinti with lots off minus points.

By Craig Tenhoff (Cktenhoff) on Tuesday, January 28, 2003 - 11:04 pm: Edit

Just remember that the FTS, FTL, FFGs, and CLG will be waiting in the support area to provide extra Gs against the ground attack ships. While they don't provide a modifier (all planets in the Capital hex automatically get the -1), they do provide Gs to take as losses against exchanges.

By Todd Lovas (Qwerty) on Wednesday, January 29, 2003 - 07:56 am: Edit

Robert- He will probably approach battle so as to cycle the fighters and refill the Carriers so he can pound me cheaply. That should mitigate the minus point factor. And you are correct that the whole line probably wont vaporize but I will be looking at a 286 points at a -2 EW Shift and a BIR total of 8+//- the variable. It
should still be ugly. And as for pursuit, can you say 5xD6D.

Daniel- Yes I can move the FRD with two size class 3 ships but not strategically. I'll have LTT (another thing that is not available at start in Tempest) next turn to handle everything. I felt it was important to place many bases this turn so as to give the Alliance more targets than they could possibly attack, hopefully.

Edward- If I remember correctly I cannot make a separate G attack if I use an SAF. It counts as my G attack for the battle round. Now I don't know if I can still use G's if the SAF is not successful.

By David Slatter (Davidas) On Wednesday, January 29, 2003 - 08:11 am: Edit

Robert

Any sane Zin player will DD the SAF, meaning the SAF can get a maximum of 2 PDUs. DDing the SAF pretty much guarantees saving 2PDUs.

By Robert Padilla (Zargan) On Wednesday, January 29, 2003 - 09:45 am: Edit

David

I think that also depends on the Coalition battle line. A SAF in a very dense line, sure blast it. But a SAF in a mediocre line, then letting the damage fall may force the Coalition player to self kill the line, including the SAF. Of course if SAFs don't do their attack during the ground combat phase, then it's moot, kill the SAF.

Todd

He does have to accept the approach battle. And if he thinks your there to stay, why would he?

By Lawrence Bergen (Lar) On Wednesday, January 29, 2003 - 11:58 am: Edit

Because if he is there to stay then I take the approaches and fight his ships first empty the carriers, refill them during the capital assault where he is pounding the fixed defenses, then once they are gone fight him ship to ship again.

You might be saying skip the approach take the minus points, but if he leaves after fighting through the approach and 2 rounds at the capital I have done far better than letting him just run in on me.

I will accept the approach.

By James Southcott (Yakface) On Wednesday, January 29, 2003 - 12:52 pm: Edit

The FCR can give you the best of both worlds: As the Alliance you want all your carriers full so that when the PDU's get blown, they produce minus points that
have to be chewed through during the next round. This will be whilst whilst he is sitting over your high compot, or at least will allow for an invulnerable pursuit. Empty carriers will suck these extra fighters in. The FCR is great for the approach - once empty they can't be refilled so they do not suck up minus points - so one round of approach but make sure the FCR's empty into the carriers after that round. NB also good battles in side systems

There's probably a tacnote there is someone wants to write it

I thought the defender had the option of taking the negative points or refilling empty carriers with homeless fighters from destroyed PDUs, not that the defender was simply forced to refill their carriers.

I forgot about all of the extra G's defenders get. Kinda makes ground attacks pointless.

Well anyway that being the case instead of trying anything fancy just send everything you can at the PDU's as fast as possible. The more you kill the less damage you take.

if you have slots available, they have to be refilled with homeless fighters

The G's on the capital planet can not be given up as casualties instead of the PDU. Only G's you place there and pay for can do that (other than the Starbase intrinsic G). Those support ships, I believe, have to be declared as using their G's to support the PDUs. When they do that, they are killable, albeit at 3 to 1. I'm not sure if that counts as your one DD attack though.

It does count as your 1 DD for the round.

The Gs on the PDUs are there to guarantee the PDU is always supported. It goes with the PDU.

So basically in capital systems G ships are worthless, really pretty worthless all around I'd say.

I thought the CAPITAL itself, had 1 free "G" Factor for each PDU. Kzintai, Hydax, Lyranstan, etc.

The other systems are fair game though.
G ships are still good to protect the SB.

Scott, you might be correct.

Scott

I don't think the capital has G's, it just gets the -1 modifier. You still have to have place G's on the planet to take the damage instead of the PDU.

It's supposed to have G's, but they are not as good as the ones you can buy and place. They die with the PDU, and can not be given up for it. So in a way David is exactly right, but the rules still call those units G's.

So, everybody is right!!!!

But who cares. AO is getting there.

My guess is that he will fight through the approaches and then stick the fleet in there for two rounds one with an SAF and then try to leave. With 12 PDUs at start of this scenario and no MB deployed popping half of the PDUs is doing good; 8 is great; any more than that is gravy.

He is hoping that if he clears them all that I cannot deploy more that 1 PDU back to the capital planet. This would allow for a less bloody turn 8 against the SB.

He has the G ships but probably will only use them as cannon fodder or maybe to try and capture.

Probably won't see the stasis ship until pursuit...or maybe in approach...hmmm have to think about that.

LawrenceB, even if the planet is stripped, you could deploy 4 PDUs at once, they just don't take effect until your next turn....

I think I knew that but for 28 EPs all he has to do is come in and slap the planet for 10 damage and they all die. I wonder if its better to try and maximize schedule rather than build 4 more PDUs on the Capital in that sense. If the SB is the only thing up and they come back as strong as they are currently, I mean.
Something to think about anyway.

The Feds could get a fleet in there and still cover the 4th SB with new construction/home fleet components plus a reserve. I think though that even if the Feds got in there they would only make a minor difference.

By John Smedley (Ukar) on Monday, February 03, 2003 - 03:56 pm: Edit

If you are using AO and all of the PDUs are stripped, build 1 PDG on turn 7. If he kills it, you've only lost 3 ep - if he doesn't, you get to build 4 PDUs on turn 8.

By Steve Cole (Stevecole) on Monday, February 03, 2003 - 04:06 pm: Edit

Sounds like a Tacnote to me!

By Lawrence Bergen (Lar) on Monday, February 03, 2003 - 04:52 pm: Edit

Hmmm...I thought I read that you have to upgrade the PGB to a PDU before adding more PDU's...I'll have to check that...maybe that was for self-gen of the PDUs. If it is possible then yeah good tactic...already thought of putting 1 PDU down for 7 and waiting to see if he kills it...not such a harsh loss...although for another 0.5 EPs one could get 3xFF in place of the PDU...and if the Capitals going to fall anyway...

By John Smedley (Ukar) on Monday, February 03, 2003 - 07:18 pm: Edit

Lawrence

You are correct, for a planet to self generate a PDU, it must already have one (PGBs do not count). This is not relavent as long as we are discussing the capital system, since no tug is required to deploy produced PDUs in the capital hex. The only thing the PGB is doing for you (assuming it is not destroyed) is allowing the 4 PDUs built on turn 8 to be immediately active.

So the tactic is valid, but only useful in the capital system.

By Bret O'Neal (Fiverdown) on Monday, February 03, 2003 - 08:17 pm: Edit

I could see it.

Turn 6, the Coalition Clean the PDU's off of Zinti capitol. Turn 6 Alliance: The Zin put 1 PDG, up. The Coalition, who should be playing with the Fed's (turn 7) now have to make a HW Raid or have +4 PDU as a possibility next turn. Would be an irritating having to re-direct the fleet aimed at the Marque SB to the Zin HW.

By Lawrence Bergen (Lar) on Monday, February 03, 2003 - 11:54 pm: Edit

Bret thats kind of where we are. (but one turn ahead). We are playing Tempest. He has chosen to knock down the 2 BATS and 3rd Fleet SB on turn 7 while making a raid into the Hyd & Kzin Capitals. We have played out the 2 BATS and Hyd Capital but crunch for time has put off the SB and Kzin Cap until next week.

Once the first full turn of events is done Todd will post everything as this is his game to post.
John thanks for clarification (I had no rulebook available)

I should note that I'm referencing an early version of the AO playtest material, not a "rulebook" per se. We've all got two wait a couple more weeks for the actual rulebook, and Steve has kept us in suspense about the final round of changes...

I've got another strategy idea to run by you guys...

I think that frigate scouts make some of the best raiding ships available. They get a 1 shift against any police ship (since they have EW and the cops don't), and they'll never have more than 1 shift against, unless the target has EW. They also make great ships to react against a raid: an F5S has a 1 in 6 chance of crippling a LGE! (LGE gets +2 for compot, -1 for EW - net shift of 1)

But you'll lose a 1EP more ship, if/when the Light Dreadnought wins. Not very wise for the Alliance.

Those Frigate Scouts, are STILL good for the extended reaction range, even if they never see combat.

Scouts cannot be used on offensive Raids. See (314.132)

Still, John has a point. Scouts are good in single combat. (which is a bit goofy and perhaps could be fixed).

I don't know for sure, but I think the way scouts are treated in single combat works out about right. Their low AF makes it harder for them to kill bigger ships even with the scout bonus, but makes it hard for bigger ships to kill them because of the scout bonus. Now, if scouts could auto-kill bigger ships, I'd say it was broke.

A kzinti SC has a 1 shift over an F5 (the SC gets he EW bonus, nothing else matters)

Is this reasonable? This means that a Kzinti SC will destroy a F5 1 time in three, cripple it 1 in 6, chase it away 1 in 6.

If not, hurry over to AO and make the case against the EW shift on the single combat chart EW modifier. Once it goes to press, there is no going back.
Sounds reasonable considering the drone racks on a Kzinti SF. They're not as good as the drone racks on a SDF, but it's not an unarmed scout like the Fed SC. Can a Fed SC do the same thing to an F5? If a virtually unarmed scout like a Fed SC or a Rom SE can easily trash a FF, like the F5, I'll agree that there is a problem. Otherwise, I don't think it's a problem.

Make the one shift optional for the person owning the scout. You can use this to help protect your ship if it is a scout. If you chose to do this and your roll results in the other ship being crippled or destroyed treat as the other ship must disengage (as the scout was not being offensive, it was jamming itself with ECM and lending offensive ECM to the opponent). If you chose not to use the one shift treat as a normal combat, whatever happens happens, if the F5 or other FF gets blown up so be it (must have been a lousy captain).

Fed SC would have the same modifiers as the SF.

Just because the Fed SC and Kz SF have the same effectiveness in single combat doesn't necessarily mean the EW warfare rules in single combat are broken. Maybe the problem is that both ships have 2 Attack Factors. Maybe the Fed SC should really be 0-6.

The AF of the Scout is irrelevant.

The bonus is obtained by comparing the AF of one ship to the DF of the other. If the AF>DF by 2+, that ship gets a bonus of 1. If AF>DF by 5+, the bonus is 2. If one side has EW and the other does not, the side with EW gets a bonus of 1.

So the SF vs F5 is:
F5 AF = 5, only 1 greater than the SF DF of 4, so no bonus
SF AF =2, not greater than the F5 DF, so no bonus.
SF has EW, bonus = 1

Any scout with a DF of 4 or more has the same chance of killing an F5, even if it has no weapons.

Supports the add "the AF and DF of each" method, taking half the differential as a die roll modifier. In your example the Fed SC becomes 8, the F5 10, so the EW differential makes it a straight die roll. Use this if you prefer it.

Is a little late in the game for any of this anyway.
Besides, how often do you see a single ship combat against a Scout? Especially a Fed SC?!!

By Philippe Le Bas (Phil) On Thursday, February 06, 2003 - 02:04 am: Edit

UHmm, perhaps a F5J 'honor duelling' an SC that was in the battleline?

But have you ever seen a Fed player putting SC in battlelines?

By Kevin Howard (Jarawara) On Thursday, February 06, 2003 - 02:34 am: Edit

I've seen it. An F5J would be proud to have the chance to take out a Fed SC, but the scout would have the advantage. That's not so bad (the F5J is not that great of a frigate), but the Fed Scout would also have the advantage over a D6J.

This should be fixed, but if it's AO that has to be changed, we just lost our chance a few hours ago. Do a house rule if needed.

By Lawrence Bergen (Lar) On Thursday, February 06, 2003 - 02:38 am: Edit

Raid with a fed CVL...Can this be done? better than a scout and compot is higher. This probably would not happen until later in the game though cuz you need those babies.

By Christopher E. Fant (Cfant) On Thursday, February 06, 2003 - 05:25 am: Edit

Can the F5J honor duel? I don't think they can. I think only the D5J and D6J can do that.

By Bret O'Neal (Fiverdown) On Thursday, February 06, 2003 - 11:01 am: Edit

On a new, more general, Topic.

Is it worth it for the Hydros to crip most of their DD & FF's to destroy the 3 Bats that are RA 6 from the HW, on turn 3?

I'm not sure myself, but I don't think so.

If the Cruisers are still intact, they can still put "god" lines over the HW. But there would be no depth in the lines, very limited number of base defenders, and limited offensive in the following turns.

By Alan De Salvio (Alandwork) On Thursday, February 06, 2003 - 11:10 am: Edit

Bret, I would say yes, since by definition those ships will be in range of repair facilities, which means they are out of action for only the coalition half of the next turn (the Hydrons should be able to afford to repair them). A smart Lyran player retains a lot of available force on the EB starbase, which doesn't threaten much on Turn 4. The Klingons can deep strike with only West and reinforcements, which should be limited. The remainder of the fleet should be enough to hold the starbases, or at least make them expensive to take out.
The alternative is to husband forces for the same Coalition turn, which doesn't make a lot of sense since the Kingdom is a target rich environment that turn and you can't cover it all.

By Robert Padilla (Zargan) On Thursday, February 06, 2003 - 12:34 pm: Edit

Just out of curiosity, do any Coalition players actually try to save the BATS in 413? Adding up the EB fleet, the Far Stars, and all of Turns 2 and 3 construction, they still can't pin the Hydrans out. I've been thinking that is the Lyrans overbuild as many FFs as possible (giving them 12-14 more hulls), and the Klingons setup a MB in 413 and strat a good chunk of their turn 3 builds there, that it could be done.

However, the West Fleet would go largely un-reinforced, and would have to be split between the three BATS on the southern Klingon-Hydran border to guard against an expedition. That means 1013 and 1214 would be mostly undefended. The Home Fleet can be set up to cover those bases, and 2 reserves can be established on the SR SB to help, but if the Hydrans want to, they should be able to take both BATS down.

Thoughts?

By Jimi LaForm (Laform) On Thursday, February 06, 2003 - 12:44 pm: Edit

If the Coalition over protects Lyran southern space, they risk a successful Hydran expedition. In my eyes it is much more important to defend against the expedition then save a couple Lyran bats.

By Ahmad Abdel-Hameed (Madarab) On Thursday, February 06, 2003 - 01:43 pm: Edit

If you attack the two Klingon BATS, aren't you inviting their Home Fleet to move 2 hexes closer to you (and therefore putting the Hydran capital in their range)? If the Hydrans attack the Lyrans on Turn 3 (They can easily reach both BATS and the SB if the really want to.), is it that much of a setback? The Lyrans can put a MB up (or even two) pretty easily in Klingon territory that will give them sufficient coverage of Hydran space for the early and middle parts of their offensive. (Owning one of the minor capital planets will be enough to complete that coverage in the last parts of that offensive and for the rest of their defensive stay in Hydran space.

By Robert Padilla (Zargan) On Thursday, February 06, 2003 - 01:44 pm: Edit

Well, if the West Fleet is set up on the three southern BATS evenly, and the East Fleet is set up to the South (right around that bend in Klingon space), I don't really see the 1st Fleet making it past the SR SB, or even to that hex column.

Personally, I think one of the reasons the Hydrans are so tough to crack is that they do not waste 1/4 to 1/3 of their fleet attempting the expedition.

By Bill Schoeller (Bigbadbill) On Thursday, February 06, 2003 - 01:57 pm: Edit

0413 is within range 6 of the Klingon base at 1013. I normally leave 50 Lyran
ships in the Southern area of Lyran space. 20(10 on reserve) at the SB, 20 at 0413, and 10 at (0212?). I will reserve 10 Klingons(including a number of maulers) to 0413 if the Hydran goes there. Note: this is a great place to use a stasis ship, if he is planning on directing at the base, he may have to not kill the base to drop the stasis ship, or you can get 2 shots with the stasis ships! Even if the Hydran wins, you are going to kill a good number of Hydran hulls. If the Hydran sends enough to have a chance of winning at the SB I would leave 20 ships at the SB, otherwise 40 Lyrans at 0413 is a tough defense. You might as well fight him over your fixed defenses, and if he does destroy the base it is not that big a deal, but extract a price for it(3-4 cruiser level hulls).

Well, I'd think you'd see a Hydran god line over that BATS, so they are sure to have enough to direct the base and the stasis ship. That's only 48 damage, easily obtained by a Hydran cruiser line, and it drops to 39 if the FSP pallet is used.

Also remember, the Hydrans do have a shot at doing enough damage to one-shot cripple a SB using the FSP. I know as I almost saw the Hydrans do this in TLLW, a game I am currently playing. It's just sick the lines they can put up over your fixed defenses.

I DID see this happen. Is ugly. Ugly, ugly, ugly.
A Federation SC trying to generate 15 ECM points (to counter the F5Bs 6 ECCM) is simply not going to be moving or able to recharge its weapons. A +2 shift is a far more realistic benchmark for a ship that small.

If the stasis ship is present you will stasis the FSP. Then you will kill the FSP, and another ship as well. If I have to trade a stasis, and a bats for the FSP and a Hydran god ship I will do so. I will not stick around at the dead base location if the Hydrans outcompete me that much, but fighting a round or 2 to kill Hydran cruisers while giving up a base is fine by me, and much better than giving up the base for nothing.

Bill, doesn't the stasis ship have to be in supply to use its special abilities?

SFGs can use their special ability when out of supply (410.32) [can't remember which CL its in]

An F5B trying to generate 6 ECCM is going to be sucking wind as well. Note also that the scout only has a few phasers--always very efficient powerwise.

F5B: 20 power - 2.5 (HK) - 6 (ECCM) - 8 (2 OL dis) - 5 (5 ph-2) = -1.5 (two turns at speed 0).

SC+: 23 power - 2.5 (HK) - 15 (ECM) - 2 (2 channels) - 3 (2xph-1 2xph-3) = 0.5 (speed 1).

If the F5B is firing standard disruptors, a +2 shift is probably acceptable (same average damage per disruptor beyond range 2, the ph-2 are still ineffective at those ranges). This gives the SC+ 6 extra power--it only needs one channel. But even speed 8 is slow, so the F5 is probably also going to drop some ECCM (3 points forces the SC+ to spend 8 power to keep a +2 shift).

I didn't say it was a slam dunk on the part of the SC+, only that I could see it winning. This battle is really going to be a game of luck, positioning and bluff. There are also all kinds of tricks (on both sides) like the SC+ firing its phasers as ph-3 (a ph-1 only averages 1.5 extra damage at range 1).

I concede that the F5B could be defeated in a long duel - but if I understand the single ship combat system correctly, it now allows for a SC to have a 1/3 chance to defeat D6.
SC has EW advantage, gets a +1 bonus on the die, kills the D6 1/3 of the time?!?

Oops. I wish I had noticed that earlier.

Edit: I am not certain I understand the rules of single ship combat, so maybe this is not a problem. Can someone check my calculations?

I'll have to agree that I can't really see a SC+ killing a D6B (with medium speed drones BPV ~129). Maybe an unrefitted D6 with slow drones and no COI.

I suspect the problem is that there is no penalty for having an Ocompot significantly lower than the opponent's Dcompot.

David, I didn't think the SC+ got the AWR replacing its labs like the other DD+ refits.

Madarab, according to my SSD (1990 edition basic set), it replaces 4 labs with APR. I don't know of any errata (and it can use the power). So while technically it doesn't get AWR (APR are cheaper and it doesn't need extra warp), it does get the 4 extra power.

Thanks, David. It clearly has more than enough power to accomplish that mission then. That's what I get for not having the rules available when I'm typing.

you guys are right:

Comparision #1 D6 - compot 7. SC, defense of 6. No advantage.
SC has EW advantage, gets a +1 bonus on the die, kills the D6 1/3 of the time.

Maybe a rule that says that a plus or minus can be given. In comp #1 - no change as stated. In comp #2 a -1 modifier should be given to the SC die roll (which in this case the EW +1 would wash). The effects of comp 1 & 2 should not be cumulative somehow. (EW effects could be though.)
Someone should have spoke up a bit sooner though...

It could work in this situation:

CA vs FF

Offensive CA 8 vs Def FF 4 advantage CA (+1)
Def CA 8 vs Offensive FF 4 advantage CA (no mod given as already earned a plus 1)

If the FF were an FFS then the FFS would (and should) also get a +1 for EW bonus.

I just cannot see how any scout (let alone the Fed SC) is going to find its way into a single combat round in the first place. No reasonable player with Fed SC is going to go looking to engage any cruiser and any player that leaves his scout out alone deserves the threat of losing it.

It's not how rare it might occur, Chuck, but that it doesn't make sense when it does occur.

Plus, I find those cruddy little Kzinti and Hydran scouts to be of little value. Yet they can now duel a D6 or warcruiser on an even stance.

Neither the Kzin and Trashcans have the warcruiser hulls to risk a single combat, but the risk of losing a SF or SC (and possibly bagging a warcruiser in return) is acceptable. Even if you disagree, I don't want other players saying "Build more frigate scouts, we need them for duels!"

Hmmm... A Fed FFS, cost 4, has an equal shot at killing a Klingon D7, cost 8.

How about having the EW bonus add to the compot and defense value, not actually modify the die roll? Fed FFS would now be compot 3, defense 6, and that D7 would retain its +1 on the die roll then.

It is not a big deal, and it is too late to change things at this point,

and...

I have not even seen it happen once.
Agreed.

and...

I use my own home rules, so I won't ever see it either.

Still, I think I'll write a Tac Note on it, just to fuel the imagination. I'll wait for AO to show up at my doorstep, to confirm that I know what I'm talking about.

By John Smedley (Ukar) on Sunday, February 09, 2003 - 12:41 am: Edit

If your opponent is raiding with cruisers, then using frigate scouts to react is definitely better than using larger ships. If he is using DNLs, then it is often best to let the police do the dying.

Kevin, you can have the Tac note (although that is why I brought it up, I did not notice that scouts are forbidden from raiding - Thanks Scott)

By Kevin Howard (Jarawara) on Sunday, February 09, 2003 - 01:13 am: Edit

My apologies, John. I just looked and sure enough, you brought it up. Huh - crazy me, I thought I had. You go ahead with the Tac Note.

It would only be used in rare situations, but hey, it's one more item in the arsenal.

By Jeff Laikind (J_Laikind) on Sunday, February 09, 2003 - 01:38 am: Edit

You know, all of this assumes that the single combat is fought on a level playing field: no terrain, equal Weapons Status, etc.

But this is a scout. Something that can see you coming two F&E hexes away. Just figure that it's an ambush, that "Attacker Destroyed" result is because the scout got the drop on the enemy ship. Possibly with the aid of other factors unseen in the F&E mechanics.

By Alex Chobot (Alendrel) on Sunday, February 09, 2003 - 01:44 am: Edit

Maybe it used its superior electronics to download a virus into the enemy ship's computers?

By William Hughes (Patchfur3) on Tuesday, February 11, 2003 - 12:59 pm: Edit

More likely it co-ordinated the attack of other assets not explicitly shown in the game. Besides, would not this be more likely a scout WITH another ship? The two together get a bonus if attacked by a single larger ship (DNL fr ex)

It is unlikely that you will aggressively hunt down patrolling cruisers with your F5S
(even with these rules). But it is quite possible that a cruiser will attack a scout picketing a captured planet, and another frigate react in to save the scout. Esp. during raids.

How about scouts get a defensive bonus only? In this case, the bonus may be applied after the die is rolled, and only if it prevents the scout from being crippled or destroyed.

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I'm playing a solo game of F&E and I'm starting to wonder whether I've got the early Kzinti strategy right. At the end of turn 2:
The Kzintis have lots and lots of carrier groups sat on the capital, and the Duke's and Count's starbases are both so much space dust.
The Lyrans have about thirty ships sat amidst the Count's cloud of dust, including plenty of popcorn to take damage against. The Klingons have seized the planet at 1105 (and the neutral minor at 1506). There's only one Kzinti border BATS left standing outside the Marquis' area.
Now, it's not clear to me whether the Kzintis should raid the Klingon border BATS in return, or just consolidate around the capital and the Marquis' starbase hex (and ship stuff off-map).

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You must defend the SBs. At least 10 ships should be on them at all times, even at the expense of capital defence. The capital can look after itself once you have ca. 40-50 ships there (depending on how many expansions you are playing with).

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The Kzintis had 10 ships on the Count's SB. I managed to get the Lyrans to time-on-target the SB with 30+ ships (something like DN, 3xBC, CC, 4xCA, 8xCW, 3xDW, 6xDD, 11xFF, SC) on turn 2C after smashing the three westernmost BATS on turn 1C. I don't really see how they could have been stopped - should I have attacked their BATS-smashing fleets on Turn 1A?
In retrospect, I could probably have stopped the Klingon attack on the Duke's SB by sacrificing ships, I guess, especially given the D6M in that attack shocked itself on the first battle round, but it would have been very messy and the Klingon elements that had smashed BATS on turn 2C would probably roll over the Duke's SB on turn 3C.
(F&E2K, no expansions whatsoever.)

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The Kzinti need to fight over their defenses every single battle turn exchanging fighters for cripples/kills. The Kzin must never self-kill unless absolutely necessary. Preserve your static defenses as long as you can without crippling your non-carrier fleets. Remember to defend those outer SB's with a minimum full strength battle line ( I prefer to put ~12 - 18 SE's over each even if it means slightly risking the capital). Remember that T2 and T3 the Coalition has a hard time taking enough SE's into the capital capturing it. They may be able to strip
some of your outer planets but that is inevitable. Make him bleed where you can. I also find that attacking the Lyrans on T1 is difficult as you cannot mount a strong enough offensive usually. I don't 'turtle', but I'm also selective about when/where I attack.

By Tony Barnes (Tonyb) On Tuesday, February 25, 2003 - 09:58 am: Edit
The Kzinti shouldn't lose all 3 western BATS on turn 1 (2 would be just about all they should lose, realistically only 1). Practically the entire Duke's fleet should be able to help on the defense plus the entire Count's. The Lyrans just don't have the ship count on turn 1 to overload the Kzinti defenders.

Don't attack on Turn 1 Alliance unless there's some really juicy target available (or clean up province raiders). Don't attack over his fixed defenses.

On turn 2, the Kzinti should have close to 20 SEs over both SBs, the remainder over the capital with 2 hefty reserves (1 capital/offmap, 1 Marquis). Remember, the Marquis is active as soon as the Klingons invade - so it can reserve in during turn 2. Those extra 10 ships can really make a difference.

With that many ships on the SBs, it'll take a lot of cripples for both of them to fall on turn 2...

By Daniel G. Knipfer (Dgknipfer) On Tuesday, February 25, 2003 - 10:04 am: Edit
Martin,
Consider keeping a force large enough to threaten any repair depot the Klingons might put together near the Marquis' area. But only if that doesn't risk the capital. That should force the coalition to deploy FRDs farther from the Fed border. Taking out Klingon bases should be considered a bonus if its possible. If he has enough forces to threaten your capital, you can't afford to deploy enough ships in the Marquis to threaten him, but if he doesn't have enough forces to in range to threaten your capital, he's probably well defended enough to stop any base attacks.

In the end, don't give up anything you don't have to and don't self kill anything if you can help it. Pick your targets carefully and always secure your retreat. And never retreat while you have fighters to spend.

By Martin Read (Amethyst_Cat) On Tuesday, February 25, 2003 - 11:45 am: Edit
Effective use of RESV markers does seem to be my biggest problem - at this stage the Coalition doesn't really need to use them much, so it's only degraded my Alliance play, not my Coalition play.
I think I'll restart - with the Count's and Duke's SBs both down and every border BATS west of 16xx dead, I can't see the Alliance recovering (even with the shredding that the Lyran south is likely to take on turn 3).
Thanks for the tips!

I think I'll restart - with the Count's and Duke's SBs both down and every border BATS west of 16xx dead, I can't see the Alliance recovering.

Of course, it should be added that the above results are quite typical - just not by turn 2. Many if not most games will see all those BATS, and both Starbases, get pulverized, as well as much of the Kzinti capital hex.

The trick is to exact as much pain as possible in trade for those bases, and to delay the coalition as long as possible in accomplishing all that. If you trade doomed bases for enough dead Klingons, the alliance will have time to recover.

With no turn 2 Zin HW raid & using F&E 2K only.

I can see both Zin SBs getting blown, turn 2(C). The coalition would have a pretty good repair bill, but nothing they are not used to.

Martin, I wouldn't worry too much about losing the SB's. If the coalition wants to take them and all the border BATS on T2 you really can't stop them. The combined Klingo-Lyran fleet has about 190 SE's T2 plus some of the K new construction can reach border Bats. Hitting 10 minor targets with 6 ships each still leaves 120-130 to kill the SB's. 20 alliance ships at each plus 2 reserves of 12 still only gives the Kzinti a combined 65 to defend with. Figuring on a 1.5 + 8 ships ratio to take down a SB gives the Coalition enough to do it, especially as they will have their best ships at the SB’s and the dross at the BATS.

None of that really matters so long as you make the coalition pay the right price for achieving it. A repair bill of 60+ EP in excess of the alliance bill would be about right IMHO.

I had one opponent who really, really wanted the Duke's starbase on turn 2. He took down the base by attacking it with 53 ships and self-killing 47 of them, including 3 carriers.

He still contends to this day that the victory was worth the losses.

That's insane! Lose 47 ships for one SB!?! What did you have to give up?
Aahhhhh, nothing like a determined offense going against a determined defense.....

I would love to hear about badly you mauled him for the rest of the game.

For myself, I am on my first serious game as the alliance and I am getting mauled big time. It's going into alliance turn 4 and in Kzinti space I have the Dukes SB, the Marquis SB and the Capital Major plant left. Everything else is destroyed or devasted. In Hydran space, I still have the expeditionary SB with 3 sids taken and the 2nd fleet SB crippled and the Capital Major planet. I am looking at the Hyrdan run to the feds as being my only saving grace.

The Coalition plays a strategy of strat the fleet. He takes a huge amount of crippled attacking the capital hex, repairs them then free strats them to the next front and does the same thing. I have been looking for a way to defeat this. Any suggestions?

Reciently I have seen for the first time the Coalition waiting til turn 2 to attack. Overall the effect was quite stunning. How would the Alliance really defend against that?

By turn two attack, I guess you mean that the Lyrans just redeploy on turn 1 but do not attempt to enter Kzinti space.

The following is just a collection of my own opinions. IMO any attack by the Lyrnas on turn 1 should have only one objective - to get the fleet within range of the Kzinti capital. If it is just to take down border BATS - which will fall undefended next turn, then it is ill-conceived.

If the Lyrans do not attack then it means that the Kzinti do not need to deploy so many ships at their capital, but can put more at the SB's. Defence for a T2 attack could be 30 ships at each SB, 30 at the capital, a full reserve off map, another at the Marquis SB. If the Lyrans do get a big fleet established in 0803 then the Kzinti will have to put a lot more ships in the capital, compromising their SB defence.

Big reserves are the key to an effective kzinti defence, even if it means that you have little by way of offence for the first few turns. They are key because the Coalition have to start overkilling targets, sending larger fleets to the SB's just in case the reserve shows up there. Believe it or not the coalition do have limits on the numbers of ships they have during the first few turns and sucking in more ships means that the shock effect of the coalitions assault is reduced.
Each turn use Ceds to reserve carrier groups off-map to make next turns reserve (that way they can't be pinned). Use the reserves to arrange it that the Duke and Counts SB's go down on different turns. That way carriers can be relocated from one to another and the Klinks/Lyrans have to chew through all those fighters whilst in front of and SB twice.

If the Lyrans do not attack on T1, on no account - and I want to make this completely clear - under no circumstances, should the Kzinti attack. After all the coalition will be able to claim you invded them first- you will lose you greatest weapon - the moral high ground.

By David Lang (Dlang) on Monday, March 24, 2003 - 07:21 am: Edit
also the kzinti are trying to loose as little as possible until the feds arrive not attacking them helps that.

By Tony Barnes (Tonyb) on Monday, March 24, 2003 - 10:33 am: Edit
I've found the turn 1 Lyran attack to be questionable at best. The Lyran forces are almost outnumbered on that turn - so they'll take pretty heavy losses to achieve any goals.

Setting up in forward positions with strong reserves is a really good idea.

On turn 2, the Kzinti won't be able to cover all the targets nearly as effectively.

However, as James pointed out, you'll lose the ability to reinforce a turn2 capital raid if the Lyrans don't attack turn 1.

For the Kzinti, assuming they deploy the Duke's fleet westward (and why wouldn't they), they'll have 53 SEs not couting bases. The Lyrans will have around 65 SEs (and many of those can't get beyond the 703/803 BATs). Throw in the fighters & compot from BATS/SB & the fights are very unbalanced towards the Kzintis.

By Bill Schoeller (Bigbadbill) on Monday, March 24, 2003 - 10:49 am: Edit
On the turn 1 attack you do not want to fight over a base that has a reasonable fleet defending it. Send enough ships to that base to pin the ships that are there and move on to a more lightly defended target. If you pin the Dukes fleet at 0803(let say 20 ships), and the Counts 20 ships at 0902(say another 20 ships), and offer approach battle and flee at each fight(killing an EFF in each round if he engages at the approach), you will be left with 25 ships to engage his 13 ship reserve(you wont be able to pin it. break up into 3 groups of 8 ships and go after 0701, 0703, and 1001. Whichever fight the Kzin reserves to you will fight an approach and leave and get 2 bats for free. This will free up 10+ ships to hit the other bats next turn.

If the Lyran does not make this attack, you should defend Kzin space as normal.
i.e. defined you bases and make him bleed at every base. If you can not
overwhelm his repair capacity, you should direct at a number of his specialty
ships, to make life more difficult for him.

I'm with Tony - the only reason to attack on T1 is a strategic one if you are going
after the Kzin capital - anything else tends produce phyrric victories at best.

Bill - I find that if the Lyrans go for a lot pinning battles they will lose a 2-3 ships
at each at least (to avoid pursuit) so probably kill 5-10 which is the amount of
ships that would be freed for T2.

The further that you can get Lyran ships into Kzinti space on Turn 1 (even if it
means getting them interred by the Klingons), means that more the Kzinti has to
protect the capital and those ships (except for the few in reserve groups) will not
be available for protecting their fixed defenses.

Jonathan managed a good T1 Lyran against me. Pin out the counts fully at 0902.
Hit 2 BATS on the border. The Duke's can only reserve to one, the other goes for
a song. You only need to attack 3 hexes.

Wouldn't (shouldn't?) the forward (westward) deployed part of the Duke's fleet be
able to react to 0902 freeing up the Count's reserve to react to the other BATS?

It should be able to yes.

I guess I'm still just very much on the fence about attacking on turn 1, even
when planning a capital assault.

And even then, the Lyran's would either expose themselves to the Kzinti on
alliance turn 2, or at least fight through all Kzinti fighters to stay in the hex
(0802?) to avoid retreating out of range of the capital with the forward fleet.

Apologies if I'm being slightly incoherent. I'm trying to work and post at the same
time.

PeterR, if the Duke's is in 1003 with a scout, then it could react to 902 or 803, if
it's in 1004, then it cannot...

Yes. It was assuming the non-reserve part of the Duke's fleet was sitting in 1003.
Is there a rationale for placing Duke's in 1004? I can think of not wanting to be caught in an open-space battle (which is a sound argument), but are there other things I'm missing?

By Kent Wendel (Huskerfan) On Wednesday, March 26, 2003 - 10:50 pm: Edit

I would imagine that the Lyran's cannot get a large enough fleet to hit 1004, and if they do, they miss out on attacking bases.

Even if the Lyrans do drop the Red Claw fleet on 1004, any Count forces at 0902 and Duke forces would head that way, and a brief, pointless battle would insue... Kzinti's break off after one or two rounds depending on fighter losses, Lyrans with a handful of cripples and nothing much gained...

Just my mental meanderings...

By Andrew Harding (Warlock) On Thursday, March 27, 2003 - 01:43 am: Edit

There isn't a lot of reason to set up the Duke's fleet detachment in 1004, but there are some. IMO the biggest of them is that if the Lyrans don't attack and thereby prevent reaction, ships in 1004 can strat move on the Kzinti turn, keeping them eligible for reserve use. Not a big reason, given the plentitude of other ships to use in reserve, but a reason.

By Brad Preston (Bradpreston) On Friday, March 28, 2003 - 01:49 pm: Edit

The Duke's fleet should leave their freighter hulls and their reserve fleet on the SB. The rest goes into the 10xx hex row (I prefer 1003 as it is within reaction range of 3 bases). I can think of no valid reason not to do so and in fact it would be detrimental to the Kzinti not to do so. If the small cats don't come across you can always redeploy them during Kzinti turn 1.

By Ray Hoffman (Rockyd) On Thursday, April 24, 2003 - 08:56 pm: Edit

Would one of the Coallition experts describe the setup for an aggressive Lyran turn 1?

By Bill Schoeller (Bigbadbill) On Friday, April 25, 2003 - 12:26 pm: Edit

Put your 6 biggest ships at the forward deploy position(0707?), the Home fleet on the SB at 0608(except for a ship or 2 to be converted(t1 or 2) and the Red Fleet(except for a ship to be converted and slow/aux units) on a neutral zone bats(prob 0705). Mount all battle pods on tugs if you are going for a vary aggressive approcah(otherwise move the FRD's with the tugs).

Move home fleet element to 0703 and 0803(try to ensure you can win both battles if no reserves show up. Send the 6 advance ships + about 10 ships of the Red claw to pin reserveat Count's SB(send more if you think he might need to reserve the Duke's here to save it). Send the other 10-15 ships left over to hit 2-
3 more bats/minor planet targets (in 5-6 ship groups). 20 compot is enough to take down an undefended bats/minor, but mid 30's will limit your cripples.

I'm wondering if there are strategic concepts in F+E that are generally acknowledged by EVERYONE.

E.G. Does everyone agree to direct on maulers every opportunity?

Putting aside the obvious ones like always make Orion go neutral or destroy a crippled DN if you got the chance, are their things that are so accepted as to be truisms?

Kill a carrier any chance you get

Always kill a DN on the line. Maybe not Lyran DNs, as they just proliferate too much, but otherwise...

I would not kill a DN on the line when attacking an SB, a homeworld, or during any other (contested) battle when I am trying to win the hex. You guarantee your opponent "winning" that battleround by doing this. In a throwaway battle, sure, but then you are hoping your opponent makes a mistake (by exposing a DN needlessly).

When I play the Alliance, I rarely direct on a Coalition ship, mostly because my ability to output damage is so rare and low that it would really hurt my ability to defend my lands properly. As the Coalition player (only played the Coalition twice mind you) I have found myself allowing the Alliance player to spread his damage. He usually only has like 18 fighters, so my other remaining 12 - 15 goes on his ships, which is a CV group which has been knocked off the line.

I agree that maulers (assuming maulers have full mauling effect), should be directed in open space battles on sight; however, in a capital assault when 70-80+ points of damage is scored, I prefer to let the damage fall. The coalition player will likely cripple it anyway rather than take the chance of an additional 10 damage fall, and you can bag it in pursuit. This is assuming that you will hold the hex, and that he is trying to soften up the capital. This is of course dependent upon how many maulers are in the hex, and what he will need his maulers for. If there is only 1 mauler in the space and he is making a big push for a capital and 80 damage has fallen, and he still has 12 pdu's to get through I will probably kill the only mauler to ensure that he will kill less pdu's a round.
I feel the decision to direct or not direct is crucial to alliance strategy. The alliance can not allow stacks of 7 BC's to be used all at once in a combat (the compot goes to high). Because of this I will normally direct on any BC that is put on a line to deny the Coalition these really large lines. I generally try to pick and choose when I do this. A battle defending the Count's Fleet SB when 3 BC's are on the line is a great time to direct and kill the 3 BC's while crippling 2 carrier groups and the SB before retreating behind it.

How about killing SFG ships as soon as they appear on the line. I have learned about this one the hard way.

Directing on a solo scout is always worth while, it provides you with at least a +1 to your rolls in subsequent combats.

The only other thing I've seen the coalition directing on was during fights with large ftr reserve, they would always seem to direct on the cruiser size of ships.

Always disagree with generalisations.......  

Actually, I think a key to victory, or at least avoiding retreat, in F&E is the ability to NOT follow a pattern, but always do what is best for the moment.

One round fights can sometimes be a good time to direct, but sometimes it might be better cripple those 4 ships if it means you can pin the enemy out of an important hex.

Lots of factors go into everything, and it is best to never let your opponent see a pattern in what you are doing, as they will often exploit it.

Never direct as the Alliance.  
Only exception to above is SFG ships. Always direct on Stasis.  

As the Coalition, (almost) always direct on SC2 hulls on the line (DN, DNL).

I now always direct on penal ships.

Forgot if it was an F5J, but in a battle with odds and ends I put a Z-MSC on the line as the second scout for an EW advantage. Penal ship challenged it to an honor duel, and as the attack of the scout is 3, even against an F5J it would've
been a straight die roll in (310). Of course, it was a 6 and my scout was destroyed without any ramification to the coalition. Man, was I pissed and any penal ship since then has always been directed upon.

Joe

I have no problem with putting stasis ships on the auto-kill list as an alliance player. They are usually easy kills, to boot. I also liked torching marine ships at one-to-one at every opportunity, but it looks as though SVC is closing that loophole. Here is my F&E generalization: its the pincount, stupid. Or: just preserve hulls, baby. The side with the superior numbers has the initiative.

Paul

Uncertainty - something you can count on.

Troop ships could never be directed on at one to one. They just didn't count as the one allowed directed damage attack, it wasn't any easier to kill them though.

Oh I agree whole heartedly chris, I was just answering the question of what would someone direct. I think my scout response is exactly what your indicating, if the opposition has 5 scouts in the hex, not much point directing it, but if the person only brough one for the sb assault well.... :-)

Then KILL IT. To quote starcraft.

Having recently bought F&E2K, I have been looking at the setups and as a hydran player been wondering this question: Since it seems that the hydran strategic situation is the toughest in the game (this I infer from the fact that the hydran capital seems doomed if the coalition really want it), what defensive strategies work best? What things have you done, or had done to you, that worked best?

There seems to be some basic things; particularly some seem to advocate destruction of the 3 battlestations in supply range of the capitol. Some however say this has little effect. What advantage does this create, and/or why would this not be a good idea? Some also seem to say that destruction of the enemy's blood starbase is a good idea as well. With the limited forces available to the hydran player, plus the need to conserve units for the all important battles to come, is this really a good idea?
Another thing that I question is the expeditionary fleet. Sending it towards the federation seems like an excellent way to lose a fairly strong fleet which will be needed later. Is the effect of potentially activating the federation a few turns early worth such a maneuver? What advantages and disadvantages are there in such an affair?

Some other questions that have to do with expansions (I hope). Looking at the hydran OOB, and build/conversion table, I see some things of interest:

1. No DW's. These are in an expansion I'd assume, since I see discussion of the DWE. Which one?
2. No Hydran CM's. The CL's the CM's were upgraded to are there. The HR/TR were considered a inferior first attempt at a war cruiser and were upgraded to the MNG/TAR eventually. Is this reflected anywhere?
3. No NCA's. Which expansion are these in? CCH's?
4. Last question I have is with regard to the Lord Commander. Looking at the conversion table it says that a RN or DG can be converted to a LM or LB - however, a LC can't be upgraded. Since the LM or LB is a LC upgrade, this seems...wrong. Is there a rule I have missed?

Sorry for all the questions, thank you for any input.

By Richard Abbott (Catwhoorg) on Saturday, May 03, 2003 - 11:43 am: Edit

Don, welcome to our little community.
The Hydrans are doomed in the coalition want it. Generally the best way to play the Hydrans is to do what damage you can at the same time as minimising your own.
Only attack targets if the benefits outweigh the risks.
Basically you have to work out what is possible with the setup that the Hydrans face.

If you can do the one turn expedition - ie the Klingons have messed up their set-up, the do so. Otherwise I wouldn't bother.

Secondly build up the capital - you have to extract maximum damage for losing it. Most experienced players have a tale of a whole battle line being killed over the Hydran capital. Its great if you can do this.

Thirdly - keep the fleet as a viable threat. If you destroy the fleet the Hydrans cannot contribute further.
If they get 50+ ships off map, they will be a permanant thorn in the side of the coalition.

DWF/DWH are in Combined operations (Special ops as was)
DWE are in carrier war
Other DW variants are in AO.

CM/CL's are 'fudged' together - really the factors probably are closer to the CM's than the CL's

NCA's are in Combined operations (Special ops as was). CCH's aren't in the game yet - probably ecowar.

for the LC look in annex 751.0 - page 79.
Hydrans have a specific cost for 'any CC to any CC' of 3 EP.
The AO site actually lists the LC to LM as being 1 EP - which is a much fairer cost.

Whilst on expansions, I'd recomended Carrier war or Combined Ops next - then the other one, as you really need these to get the most out of Adv Ops.

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The expedition is best done (IMO) by linking the Hydran and Kzinti forces. If the Hydrans and Kzinti attack the same target, and the Hydrans retreat & retrograde with the Kzinti, you end up with the Hydrans in Kzinti space at the end of alliance turn 3. Alliance turn 4 the Hydrans can easily cross the Fed border and activate them (after being adopted as homeless by the Kzinti).

Early Fed activation is thought by many here to be game-ending for the Coalition. Whether or not you believe that, it certainly makes their likes much more difficult. Note any Hydran ship can activate the feds - it does not have to come from the expeditionary fleet.

One final point - you do not have to set the Hydran forces up until alliance turn 3. Do not set them up before this. Your setup telegraphs your intent (expedition through Klingon waist, expedition up the K\L neutral zone, attack on SB 0411, etc.)

I also bid you welcome!

If you have the time, go back into the archives...F&E material shows up in surprising places all over the board...some good...some not as valuable but most of it very interesting!

Good Luck!

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Re: directed damage.
As the alliance I think letting the damage fall is great in capital assaults but in most other circumstances I would direct to kill the best/most useful ship I could. I choose either maulers or EW ships as a primary target and try to minimize the coalitions strength in one area.

Don,

the Hydran's get the first strike, so have to plan it out carefully.

They usually can't take out all 3 BATS within range of their capital on Turn 3, so have to make plans accordingly.

Attack EITHER the Klingons or Lyrans. Look at the deployment of the Reserve Fleets that are activated when the Hydrans attack (Klingon Home and Southern, Lyran Enemy Blood's) and any Reserves the Coalition deployed in the region on Turn 3. Make sure you take those Reserves into account when attacking. If you don't you'll probably not destroy your target(s) and will have allowed 15+ Coalition ships that much closer to the Hydran Capital.

The Expedition doesn't have to be launched with the 'cream' of the Expeditionary Fleet. In fact a group of FFs lead by a CC and the Tug with the Supplies can do the job just as well. They're not going to fight, their going to RUN AWAY all across Klingon space.

Don't invest too much in defenses in the Capital. Each lowly FF you build requires another Coalition ship to keep the Hydrans bottled up. Balance your ship construction with Capital defenses.

Hope this helps. I recommend that you read through the Reports from the Front for more ideas / insight into game strategies.

OK,

Strategic Question:

Alliance Turn 4, using all rules. Assuming the ship counts on the Kzinti front are near equal, so ever SE counts.

Would it be better to Build a CV instead of the DN and Convert a BC to a CV for 5 EP?

Net cost: 1 DN Hull, 17 EPs instead of 16
Net benifit: 3 SE deployed (1 new hull, 2 fighters) instead of 1 (new hull)
WELL, if the Kzin have not lost their 2 starting DN\2s and they have at least one BT available, then I would build the CV.

I would build at least one more Kzin DN by turn 6-7, so you have three, or build one to replace a loss.

But otherwise, 2xSE and CR9 are better than 1SE and CR10.

Though, I would upgrade the CVLs to CVs before eating into the BCs.

The CVLs are a second line carrier unfortunately, and don't see combat much other than pin battles and killing E4s for province cleaning.

Leave the CVEs to clean provinces, get the CVLs up to CVs and still have the BCs available to defend the homeworld.

Actually Craig, since ChrisF brought it up, I was going to email you the list of things from J2 (Patrol Carrier/Interdiction Carriers, etc) and if you wanted to incorporate those into our current game (since most is like Y173+ for the stuff)

Because, a Kzinti CVL 8(4)->CVD 4-8(12) could happen if you wanted to.

Email tomorrow after doing Coalition T4 movement.

(edit)

Since we have all the rules for these already. Oversized Squadrons, and Heavy Fighters. Just the stats I have to mail you.

But the low down is this. CV->CVD is a 2 pt conversion. Going (from a Kzi CVL) 4 ftrs to 12 ftr (oversized). Which is better then a CV's 6ftrs.

OOo.....I wonder if Lar would let me use the CVF and DVL........

Chris,

2DNs, 3BTVs, and 1 BTT currently, so there isn't a lack of command ships. And I think that the outer planets (1202 & 1504) will fall this turn, so that leaves the entire fleet at the Homeworlds (sans the Marquis garrison).
I've been working the CVLs to CVs conversions. So far, I've converted 2 CVLs to CVs, but converted 1 BC to a CVL to get the 4 extra fighters to the front quicker (from 0902 on turn 1). With the 3 fighters used up by the DDV, I'll have 13 free fighters going into turn 4. Enough for 2 CVs outright.

I could build a CV a turn, but that would delay the extra SE 1 turn. I was actually thinking of buying 1 extra fighter at some point to do another CVL-CV conversion.

Of course the final decision wont occur until I see exactly what Scott leaves me with at the end of Coalition Turn 4. I might have enough $ for both the DN and a CV conversion 😊. Or then again, just a huge repair bill 😬.

Scott,

sounds like a plan. Send me the YIS dates and stats for the various ships (on both sides), when you get a chance.

Of course, with CVAs becoming available at about the same time, I bet it will be awhile before I create any of those.

By Tony Barnes (Tonyb) on Wednesday, May 07, 2003 - 10:23 pm: Edit

The problem is, eventually you'll need more DNs (for CVAs). If you don't do it now, you may not be able to do it later (due to restricted finances).

However, I'd probably go the 2 CV route...

By Craig Tenhoff (Cktenhoff) on Thursday, May 08, 2003 - 12:20 am: Edit

My thoughts exactly, which is why my quandry.

However, given the current ship counts, it may be worth it to sacrifice a DN build to up my ship counts. Because with enough hulls I could keep the Coalition out of the Capital with any major force for another turn.

By Christopher E. Fant (Cfant) on Thursday, May 08, 2003 - 12:59 am: Edit

WEll, build when the CVA becomes available, replacing the DN and a CV with the CVA build works out alright. You aren't building as many escorts at that point, and the extra money is usually enough for the CVA.

So, do build one DN, maybe 2, before turn 10-12, but other than that, go for the CVs.

By Tony Barnes (Tonyb) on Thursday, May 08, 2003 - 10:11 am: Edit

Also, if pin count is your critical factor, some things to consider...
- convert a BC to BF
- Build the DN as DNL
- build a SAV or LAV (once you have pin parity, you can start thinking offensively)
- put fighter modules on that fighterless BATS (assuming you have one)

By John Colacito (Sandro) on Thursday, May 08, 2003 - 10:11 pm: Edit

I have two questions while on this Kzinti carrier topic...

Why do you guys seem so thrilled with the CVL>CV conversion? I can think of so many better things to do with 4EP, a major conversion and 2 free fighters. I actually prefer building a few TGs early on and converting BC>CVs instead.

Also, what do you guys recommend doing with the DDV? It wastes 3 free fighters. so what exactly do you do with the 3 fighters left over? Do you build an FCR, convert that CVL>CV or...?

By Tony Barnes (Tonyb) on Thursday, May 08, 2003 - 10:33 pm: Edit

John - the FCR takes up 6 free fighters (not 3). It doesn't get the hybrid rate when using fighter factors.

I imagine I'll just suck it up & pay the 6EPs and still build 2xCV per year.

By Craig Tenhoff (Cktenhoff) on Thursday, May 08, 2003 - 10:45 pm: Edit

John,

doing the BC to CV conversion requires that you pay for extra escorts or strip the CVL (which turns it into a glorified replacement, so I can see why some people prefer the CVL to CV conversion.

That being said, I normally prefer the BC to CV conversion myself. However, in my recent game with Scott, I found a tactical advantage to doing a BC to CVL conversion at 902 on turn 1 and a CVL to CV conversion at 1401. It cost me 1 extra EP (6 vice 5) over the BC to CV conversion, but it let me get 4 extra fighter factors on target against the Lyran.

Turn 2, I found that I had forgotten a BC at the Capital and wanted to build the TGC to get another BTV deployed. As such, I used CEDS to get a CVL back to the Capital for conversion. Coupled with the DDV activation and a CV conversion on turn 3, that's now left me 13 free fighter factors turn 4.
So I'm planning another CVL to CV conversion, which will leave me 2 CVLs. One of those may become a CVD, since Scott and I have been talking about using the J2 playtest ships at some point.

The 3 free fighters for the DDV are expensive, but it gives you another 2 SE for pinning purposes and another 6 attrition factors. I've found it useful in reserve
fleets that I plan on using to disrupt 'secondary' battles, where Scott hasn't placed major forces. This lets me use it as a single ship CV in the formation box and/or keep it for ready pursuit.

Tony,

exactly. I built one on turn 1 when the Kzinti were relatively 'fat' with EPs.

Since then, things have started to get tight. Which is why I started the discussion on DNs vs CVs.

And in response to your items:

1) If I have 3 extra EPs a BC->BF conversion would be a great idea. However, sacrificing a FF for one isn't. I have enough fast ships at the moment (2 DNL and 3 BF) so that an extra isn't a necessity, but are nice to have. I think I'm going to need extra FFs around to becone EFFs without having to pay the 'accelerated' replacement penalty.

2) DNL, falls into the same category as the DN. It costs as much as a CV for the same pin count, and then I have to find the EPs to deploy those extra 6 free fighters on something.

3) Aux CVs. Again, $$. I can barely build the schedule at this point (and actually sacrificed 1 FF last turn to keep ALL of my Carriers escorted), let alone think about extra auxes. Of course an extra SAD would be nice for the upcoming Homeworld defense

4) See 3 I haven't even tried to update either MB to a BATS yet

I think if I hadn't been agressive turn 1 & 2, I might be able to afford one or more of those (spent 14 EPs turn 2 and 27 EPs turn 3 on repairs!). However, I doubt it. I think that without my aggressive defense & counter attacks, Scott would've hit the Capital and devastated a couple systems turn 3.

John C.

Use free fighters on the DDV, then do one or two CVL->CV conversions.

I generally find I have problems with escorts if I build CVs at maximum rate, so the breather given by the DD and conversions is good.

OK, another situation.
I've already made up my mind of what I'm going to do, but want to pose the question here for discussion.

Here's the Scenario:
- Turn 4 in the Hydran Theater.
- Lyran BATS at 212 and 413 have been destroyed.
- The Lyran and Hydran have attacked the BATS at 515, and the line from 915 through 1219, and the Minor at 416. There are no extra ships at those locations.
- The Coalition has attacked the Expedition SB with almost equal ship counts. A few Hydran ships were free to react to the Homeworld.

The Coalition has attacked the Homeworld with 66 SE (Broken out between hulls, ftrs and fast ships). They have a L-DN, 2-BTV+E4A groups, 2-D7C, 1 D6M, 1 D6J, 2 FD7, 6-D7/CA hulls, 4-D6 Hulls, and the majority are CW or smaller hulls. They have 1 2pt Scout and 2 1pt Scouts.

The Hydrans have 35 SE of Hulls and Ftrs shipboard. There are 30 SE of Ftrs based on PDUs. 2 MBs are being deployed in the Capital.

Additionally there are two Reserves, one of 18 SE and one of 14 SE at the Homeworld.

The 18 SE Reserve contains the PAL, 4-RN, 1-DG, 3-HR, 3-KN, and a PGS.

The 14 SE Reserve contains the FCP and the Supply Tug, LNs, HNs lead by a LM.

Now the Question:
Do you move the 14 SE Reserve to the BATS 915 to save the BATS & threaten the expedition? Even though this MAY endanger some of the Home World Minors/Majors?

There are enough Hydran CAs to have a 120 plus line against the Coalition forces. That will more than likely cause the three full approach battles to be fought before the Coalition can reach the Homeworlds.

One of the benifits to this, is that I could 'herd' a portion of the Klingon fleet attacking the Homeworld to retrograde to the EB Starbase if they want to be safe from a counter-attack.

The other benifit, it that even if I don't launch the Expedition, it will draw more Coalition ships off the Kzinti to prevent me from even attempting it.

So what does everyone else think?

By Christopher E. Fant (Cfant) On Monday, May 12, 2003 - 04:19 am: Edit
Hey, zip to 915 and make him sweat a little.

I'd personally reserve to 1116 with the 14 SE force. IMHO, that will force the Klingons to pull more forces back than 915 for anti-expedition work.

35 SEs at the capital + 18 SE reserve should be enough to make his day pretty painful (esp with only 1 mauler & no SFG).

Use both reserves but don't move all of the ships in each. So take 6 to 8 SE from one reserve group and 6 to 8 SE from the other and go save two different locations. Like 915 and 1116 or 1116 and 1217. This lets you still threaten the expedition while causing a little more damage to the coalition fleet.

I'd like point out about this "Delayed Hydran Expo", is that the Klingons, (and Lyrans) can strat move their new build into place to block the expedition.

The Klingons make over 15 Frigates (including Mothballs) in one turn, so that will work to slow it down.

15?.......2xF5Q+3xE4+2xF5+3xE4........14?

Still........yowzers.

True, but you
- must have a leader with those (or the higher command rating of the Hydran ships will let them through)
- you'll likely have to deploy those ships in positions where they can't do anything to they Hydrans next turn (in which case, the Hydrans win anyway)

The strategy just forces the Coalition to choose from bad options. Either deploy forces out of position to do much useful or potentially let the expedition through.

And Scott forgot to mention that he can strat move repairs from the North to help block the Expedition. However, the Lyrans are limited (unless they want to use Klingon Strat Moves) on where they can go.

That being said, each of those options force the Coalition to react to the Hydrans, which is a good thing IMO.
The Klingons can either:
a) draw extra ships from the North to help block the Expedition
b) redeploy ships in the Hydran theater to block the Expedition, which will limit their offensive capabilities
c) Do nothing and hope they can stop the Expedition once launched.

Any of these options takes pressure off one of the Alliance Powers, giving them time to build up or risks early Federation Activation.

And time is what we need!!

What do we want???? TIME!!!!
What do we got????? NONE!!!!

(Brought to you by your local Kzinti drill instructor)

I'm playing a solo game with no CEDS, weak maulers and no free fighters (except for hydran hybrids).

I don't like this ruleset as of yet. Simply because it has made the game less fun to play. The Kzinti are encouraged not to fight. For instance, rather than allowing a close SB fight to go ahead to maximise enemy casualties, they will reserve to the SB to make it a one-round battle, simply because they can't afford to take the cripples. It's better that a significant coalition fleet hasn't done anything for a turn, even if few coalition ships were crippled. Counterattacking for the Zin is much harder. Without the maulers acting against ships, there is less of a worry about the Zin losing ships - and that relaxes alot of the Zin battleforce strategy.

The only aspect of this I do like is the lack of free fighters. Vastly improves the game, makes builds much more interesting. At the very least, free fighters should be reduced to a third of their current levels.

Dave.

Are the Kzin building any carriers?

If so, what are they giving up every time they need that 12 EP?

Penal ship question:

Have players ever found an occasion where the "special mission" use of a penal ship is valuable. You're trading 2.5% more damage for the loss of six compots,
which at low intensity with big battle forces is useful, but doesn't make a lot of sense otherwise. Plus, since the ship is crippled, you're giving your opponent seven or eight free damage points.

The only potential use I could see is when you have to get enough points to kill a key unit, but wouldn't it make sense to just replace the penal ship with a bigger ship and choose a higher intensity?

By Robert Padilla (Zargan) On Friday, May 16, 2003 - 01:27 pm: Edit

I could see a use for that maybe over a Coalition SB, or *gasp* a Coalition homeworld. In a high COMPOT situation like that, that extra bit of damage really gets magnified. Also, it could come in handy to either reduce or nullify your opponents EW advantage for a round.

By Scott Tenhoff (Scotttt) On Friday, May 16, 2003 - 01:39 pm: Edit

The same time you use a captured ship, so you get a bonus of +2 BIR, go for the big BIR and hope you roll a '6' so it gets bumped up to 50%.

You listening Craig?? (hehehehhe)

By Edward Reece (Edfactor) On Friday, May 16, 2003 - 02:27 pm: Edit

You need a compot of 320 for 2.5% to generate 8 points of damage. Which is the same as the damage your "taking" by crippling the penal ship. Plus remeber your guaranteed to lose the penal ship because its 1:1 and it doesn't count as the one directed damage attack, thye are unlikely to have less then 4 points of damage available. The only time I have seen a penal ship be any use at all is when I was being pursued, it did save a carrier once. But then if I had 7 minus points before the pursuit I would not have needed the penal ship. As far as I can tell the penal ships are a big minus for the coalition. As a coalition player I would be happy to get rid of the penal ships. My biggest problem with them is that if they are on the line and not doing any special function they should not be directed on at a 1:1 ratio and as a free directed attack.

I have not yet tried the penal ship plus 2 stasis ships combination but I imagine that will only get three klingon cruiser wacked, in exchange for 3 or 4 Hydran ships.

By Bill Schoeller (Bigbadbill) On Friday, May 16, 2003 - 02:55 pm: Edit

The Klingon did get the penal ships added to the order of battle for free(i.e. they did not use up any hulls) so the ships are simply free ships. If you think penal ships hurt the Coalition so much you could always leave them to defend a capital that will not be attacked and leave them out of action, or just don't put them in the line. I personally think penal ships are very convenient ships to have that have many uses, but like any other tool, they must be used carefully.

By Alex Chobot (Alendrel) On Friday, May 16, 2003 - 03:02 pm: Edit

Well, the intial penals are free, but they must be replaced if lost, or you pay a
Substantial penalty.

Bring it ON!

The force you have will need a good roll even with a +2 modifier to get through that Hydran Line I have. 😊 My EW advantage negates the first one, and my COMPOT advantage negates the second modifier. So the question is, do you think you can outroll me?

AND it guarantees an extra easy kill for me, since the Hydrans will toast it fairly easily.

PLUS, that will put you 2 D6Js down. Since you can only replace 1 a year, can you say EP penalty…. I knew you could. 😊

Ed,

you sacrifice 8 damage to do an extra 3 or 4. Sometimes, that extra damage will allow the Klingons to get something good, like Mauling a CV group to death that they normally wouldn't have enough damage to kill.

Same with the sacrifice mission. You sacrifice the Penal to prevent something more expensive from dying.

Both of the above uses are calculated risks and shouldn't be taken lightly or automatically.

The Double D7A, D6M, Supported by a D6J and a D6S is truely awesome. After the Sacrifice, the enemy has to do 20 damage to get 1 D7A and 32 to get both. And that lets the Mauler roll for shock. A properly formed D7A/D6M/D6J/D6S force can play havoc on the enemy, and if you're lucky, all the specialy ships but the D6J will survive. Even if just a majority of them survive (lose D6J and 1 D7A), you've probably killed more EPs worth of units then you lost, so you've come out ahead in the long run.

And NEVER put penals on the Line if you can avoid it, unless there is no way the enemy can generate the damage to destroy them. The damage to destroy them vs the EPs they cost (and the penalties for not replacing them) makes them primary targets.
Someone wrote a TacNote on using the Penal ship Honor duel against a cripple to gain a second Directed Damage against a pursued force.

So they are far from useless. They just require planning and a weighing of the cost vs benefits before being used.

It was never if you didn't have "3 at all times", it was "try to get to 3" or you lose the EPs.

Here's a snippet.

(528.211) Each Fall Turn, the Klingons may produce a maximum of one penal cruiser, either a D6J or a D5J, by any means. If the Klingons have less than three penal cruisers at the start of the Production Step of a spring turn, they must produce one penal cruiser during that step or pay a penalty of 5 EPs.

Scott,

my bad....

HOWEVER, you owe me 5 EP in our game, since it's a Spring Turn and you're down one D6J/D5J....

Let's move the discussion on the D6J/D5J to our game thread, since it's relative to that.

Things to do with Penal ships
- In a situation where you know you're about to retreat, manage the damage so you have 0 points left (or even 1 plus point). The opponent knows you have a D6J ready for the retreat. If they retreat, include the D6J in your force (as you have to) and sacrifice it to save other targets. If they don't pursue (because they know you have the D6J), you saved 1.5-2 EPs because you didn't have to over-crip a ship to get to 7 minus points.
- Take the 7 minus points into retreat as normal. The opponent pursues with 6 ships. Your D6J honor duels 1 of the pursuers. If successful, the opponent loses 16% of their ships.
- To keep your SFG ships alive. In the first round of battle, over-crip a BT for 11 minus points. Then, in the next round, include SFG/mauler/penal. That's 19 minus points to help cover the SFG ship (more valuable than a penal ship).
- When you're pursuing, use your penal ships to honor duel cripples (as John C brought up)

Chris
The ZIn convert CVI->CV and build FCRs in a non free-fighter environment.

so, what happens when you run out of the 3 starting CVLs?

That would give you 7 CVs. With no CEDs, is that enough?

I just received CO. I'm not sure I understand how a Commercial Convoy works. Could someone familair with CC's give me a play-by-play on one trip delivery of EP's?

Thanks

Somebody write it up and we'll put it in CL26 as an article.

Has anyone ever abandoned a Capitol under 511.6? The current tactical situation is that the Hydran Capitol system is cut off from the offmap and all the planets have been razed except for Hydrax minor. Only the SB (2 SIDS) remains as a static defence and there is no chance the Hydran Navy can defend the hex in the next turns assult. Do I give up on the Capitol and try to preserve the Navy or risk loosing a large part of my navy and fight a hopeless battle?

You should fight at the Starbase, but get out everything that can leave. Leave the big ships at the capital to fight over the Starbase. Fight a few rounds, and if you are in bad shape then duck behind the Starbase. If you are in good shape, fight a few more rounds.

Chris & David:

no CEDS has two main consequences:

1. Carriers are not crippled voluntarly as a matter of course.

2. Carrier escorts are still crippled to resolve damage, but every fleet needs a few backup escorts to rebuild it's fighting strength so it can fight on both player turns. In this way carriers are still the best damage sponges in the game (since you can cripple the escorts and lose the fighters without risking a significant hull).

Basically my point is that no CEDS does not mean you need more carriers to be as effective - it means you need more escorts. Lack of free fighters does not make escorts any harder to build - so this is not a problem. In fact, with the
mauler change, you are a lot less likely to lose a CV group, so you may find your
carrier fleet more effective (certianly stuffing groups is not needed unless you're
attacking a coalition SB).

RE no CEDS.

I was using/building/converting extra carrier escorts. And I was avoiding crippling
any carrier whenever possible. Problem was that if the Zin defended any where
properly, they had to cripple say, 10-15 escorts/vanilla ships/scouts. Losing those
ships (even though they were not carriers) for an extra turn was very unpleasent.

A secondary effect of enemy LAVs and SAVs on coalition weak points compounded
the problem. A small Zin CV fleet with, say 30 fighters does not really win against
a larger coalition fleet with 24 fighers (18 from aux + 6 bats).

I think we need a blanket rule that allows the non-phasing player to retrograde a
limited number of ships that have just been in combat (1 reserve's worth?). Then
we remove CEDS. CEDS is a very powerful defensive tool, and its removal simply
hands the attacker a significant advantage.

I didn't really find my carriers any more effective. If anything, they were less so,
as they had very little back-up from the rest of the Zin fleet, which tended to end
up in the fender shop.

John, you have good points, but there are two other conditions to take into
account.

1. you loose the extra retrograde so your carriers aren't as mobile.

2. since you don't have free fighters while the carriers you do build may be more
effective, you have fewer of them (or fewer overall ships as you pay for the same
number of carriers)

Davids

Don't get me wrong - the Kzinti are definitely weaker with this rulesset. The
Hydrans are much stronger, however - They can field cruisers without losing them
sometimes (with judicious use of minus points), and their fighter advantage is
made more significant by the coalition's lack of fighters.

The Feds are the middle ground - they can make CC lines without losing a CC
(advantage) but lose of CEDS makes their carriers less mobile (disadvantage).

I like the idea of limited retrograde for the non-phasing player.

David S.

Any chance you could post the details of your solo game, so those of us interested in the effect of these rules changes could benifit from your experience?

hmm kzinti weaker, hydrans stronger. this is going slightly in the wrong direction (since historicly the hydrans lost their capitol and the kzinti didn't, in F&E the kzinti is slightly more likly to fall

not a fatal flaw by any means, just a item to track when determining the final balance

John

Most of the important details I have already relayed. I wasn't keeping good track of compots, who won what battles, everything. I was also trying out a new strategy for the Lyrans which I want to refine before putting up a tacnote.

However, the biggest shock was that the Red claw can take out the count's SB with the entire counts fleet on it except a BC and FF. I didn't want to reserve the Baron's fleet there, as the Zin wanted to keep 0803. Besides, I figured the Zin should get an OK exchange even if the SB went down. However, when coupled to the no CEDS ruleset, the Zin cannot really afford to fight on coalition turns. I should have reserved to the count's SB turn 1 and let 0703 and 0803 go (in restrospect, the intitial Zin setup should have had the entire Count's fleet at the SB). The Lyrans would have effectively got a free BATS, but then the Zin would have the use of ~10-12 extra ships on Zin turn 1 and coalition turn 2. Certainly, the extra ships added to the Lyran Home fleet in AO could be put to very good use.

Turn 1 Zin, I tried several counterattacks with the Zin, replaying the turn 3 times. This was to confirm that any counterattack really was a losing prospect for the Zin economically, despite numerous lyran cripples. Even if the Zin had had CEDS, the ships repaired by CEDS would have been mainly drawn from the Duke's and Home SBs, which are too distant for easy strikes into lyran space. The Zin counterattacks were cheifly stymied by Lyran Auxes, but the extra Lyran hime fleet ships also played a major part.

Turn 2 was very bad for the Zin. Without 10-12 ships still, and the Lyrans still in
good shape, a lot of lyrians attacked the Duke's. The Klingon NR added into to ensure the Duke went down, while the Klingon north fleet had a 1-2 round pop at the capital to keep the PDUs under control. Various elements mopped up all the border BATS and planets bar the ones within reaction range of the Marquis. The Zin turn was spent getting the cripples of the Duke's fleet to the safety of the off-map area with very little other activity possible. Again, the Zin remained down 10 ships or so because of lack of CEDS.

Only turn 3C did things begin to look up for the Zin a little. The Klingons had been purchasing fighters (no free fighters) over buying FRDs. The Lyrians had used their tugs for combat (bar 1) on turn 2, and hadn't set up the FRD park on 1407. So the coalition was forced to be a little more circumspect when attacking 1502 / 1504 / 1202 / 1401 / 1605 (border bats) as their main 3 turn 3 targets.

A Zin reserve saved 1504. 1202 and 1605 went down unopposed. 1502 had its PDUs stripped, but it was an unexpectedly expensive affair for the Klingons. The Klingons at 1401 only downed the PDUs on one major and 3 or so on the capital. Again it was somewhat painful.

At this point I called it. I know, I didn't really go anywhere. But I had seen enough to realise how no-CEDS really made Zin play tedious. While I understood that the Hydrans would be stronger, I couldn't see any justification for a rule change that made one of the major challenges of the game (Zin counter attacking) into an almost impossibility. I also noted that the Lyrians had 90+ ships in their southern theatre (repairs had been going that way, and this partly explains coalition caution turn 3). The Klingons had been reinforced only slightly, and had an anti-expedition set-up. So the Hydrans were not going to have much fun.

So, the playtest has resulted in the suggestion that CEDS should be replaced with a limited non-phasing player retrograde for, say 1-2 reserve fleet's worth of units that have been in combat (alternatively, use the Strat limits).

Summary.
1) I really liked "no free fighters". This seemed moderately balanced by itself.
2) I wasn't sure I liked the Maulers being only usable against bases. I think they should be usable against ships, just perhaps weakened. For instance - no use against the formation bonus ship. Removing Maulers vs ships removed a major interest factor in the game.
3) I didn't like the CEDS fix in its current form.

Other thoughts that went though my mind if you are playing with a "no free fighters" ruling.

1) Escort carrier fighters should only cost 1.5 per factor.
Conversions/substitutions to escort carriers is only 1 EP.
2) The first carrier of any new type should get a fighter discount - maybe costing only 1/fighter. (0.5 for an escort carrier).

That way, we would still see UHs, and maybe an EV would pop up out of the woodwork.

That could be Good.
Carriers would show up, (with the discount on one) but not be a "always build your max" proposition.

All this talk about auto-kill rules has made me think about the strategy of killing ships. I think in my games, ships get killed more often. I wanted to ask about that.

Imagine a situation like this (very artificial one):

A Klingon force of 1 C8 (in form) and 10 D5's is attacking a Kzinti force early in the game. The Kzintis are about to retreat, and pursuit will be impossible. The Kzintis score 22 points of damage.

Naturally, if the Kzins don't direct, the Klingons will cripple 3 D5. Would anyone advocate the Kzinti directing on and destroying a D5?

Under normal circumstances... not a chance

Though I'm sure there are exceptions to my choice as it fully depend on the present strategy.

"Conversions/substitutions to escort carriers is only 1 EP."

Now this I can buy. Smaller ship, less effort to convert. Makes sense.

Similarly, Drone ships w/o scout channels should cost one less point to product than those with scout channels. Precedent : Kzinti DF vs. SDF.

The D6D gains bombardment AND scout functions. The D5D (and NCD and whatever other DB ship there is/will be w/o scout channels) conversion does not add as much to the ship, so should be cheaper.

Joe
Paul,

In general, I'd rather make the Klingons take the hits. It cost almost as much to repair the 3 ships as build a new one, it clogs repair facilities, and it puts those ships out of action for at least a turn.

The exception would be if the Klingons has a bunch of fighters on the line and weren't going to take ANY significant damage. This is why I tend to direct much more on the Hydrans. I don't like the idea of dishing out 200-300 pts of damage, and scoring very few cripples. At least if I kill them, they are gone. But they are an exception. I kill the largest ship with the most fighters I can (most fighters being the primary factor).

By Tony Barnes (Tonyb) on Monday, June 02, 2003 - 04:08 pm: Edit

Let em cripple 3xD5. It takes patience to overload Coalition repair capacity (FRD/bases & EPs), but the payoff can be worth it.

By Joe Stevenson (Ikv_Sabre) on Monday, June 02, 2003 - 04:15 pm: Edit

"It takes patience to overload Coalition repair capacity (FRD/bases & EPs), but the payoff can be worth it."

Very true.

also, it has been my experience that once the Coalition repair capacity is backlogged too far (more than two turns worth after repairs complete), he HAS to kill ships, or the offensive stalls due to lack of useable hulls.

Joe

By Paul Bonfanti (Bonfanti) on Monday, June 02, 2003 - 04:28 pm: Edit

Thanks for everyone's response. I think that what I was expecting people to say, and usually, that's how I would play.

But I was thinking about it, and wondering if there's a different way to approach it. The temporary loss of three D5 and 4.5 EP's versus the permanent loss of 1 D5 plus the salvage seems like a even trade. If you then take it up another notch, and kill a D7 or even better, it starts to look like a good deal. Is that just wrong in people's minds?

By Joe Stevenson (Ikv_Sabre) on Monday, June 02, 2003 - 04:31 pm: Edit

"Is that just wrong in people's minds?"

Well, as I say, eventually, you'll force him to kill the ships for you, at a must more favorable exchange rate.

The other exception of course are specialty ships, which are harder to replace.
Well, if I was facing a C8, D6M, 9xD5 & did 28 damage, I usually don't kill the D6M...

If Klingons are the attackers and use the mauler, I usually won't direct (make him self cripple it or risk a shock).

If the Klingons are the attackers & don't maul (or if the Kzinti are the attacker), it's a bit more of a difficult decision, but I usually won't bag the D6M anyway.

Of course it all depends on the overall game & current situation (ie, if there is NO backlog & no hope of generating one, I'm more likely to direct. if there is a big backlog, I almost surely will not).

Paul in the example you give I would let the damage fall. However, there is merit to a strategy of directing at key ships.

1. If the alliance directs on 10 compot ships & specials from day 1 it is possible to keep them down to manageable levels. This reduces the coalition's compot edge, so in an equal number of rounds the alliance then takes less damage, can therefore stick around longer and deliver more damage.

2. There can also be a psychological element - if you keep on blowing up BC's, D6M's, D6D's to the point where they are below a comfortable level in your opponents opinion, then he might hold back on using them. Every round they are held back is a minor alliance victory. As an extreme I've played a few games with a friend who had real problems about losing ships. He liked to build big pretty fleets, didn't mind crippling them, but hated getting them blown up. After losing a few expensive elements he would pull the rest out of the line and never use them and then wonder why the coalition advance was painfully slow. I believe Sun Tzu has something to say about that. Anyway after a bit of cognitive behavioural therapy he's all better now 😊

3. Economic. If your opponent is converting a D6M as well as subbing one, then in effect each one destroyed will be costing over 10EP to replace even after the salvage. Effectively you are converting 28 damage to 10EP economic damage. Any ratio between EP and damage in the 2:1 to 3:1 area is very favourable.

4. Reducing the shock - the limiting factor on the size of the coalition fleet that will attack the federation is generally the build schedule rather than economics (though it depends upon how intense the coalition has decided to run the war in the early turns). Directing upon a hull reduces the absolute size of the coalition
fleet (short of overbuilds) during the critical initial assault on the federation.

The last game I played saw 176 dead coalition hulls dead by T10. The coalition assault on the Feds was pretty anaemic. The high losses were due to - alliance directing, pouncing on province raiders and a coalition attack on the Hydran homeworld which had a 430 or so compot.

It seems to me that both strategies, directing at key ships or letting fall, are valid. One thing that is certain is that flipping between the two (directing a bit then letting it fall a bit) is the worst of both worlds - If you start directing on maulers after the coalition has built 20 the effect will be minimal and the coalition has the advantage of a more active fleet. Directing a bit in a mainly 'let it fall' strategy will probably mean the coalition can just about cope with the repairs.

Yeah, just pour salt in that wound James.....

Hey - did I say who it was against?? ; ) I notice the ship hoarder is staying quiet.

Has anyone tried the Hydran Expedition with F&E2K and AO? The last time I tried it (F&E 93 + CVW), The Hydrans became off-map province raiders in short order. I've been a little gun shy ever since. However, each expansion adds more ship equivalents...

If the coalition is forced to pull enough hulls from the Kzinti front to cover all avenues of attack for the expedition, that should make it easier to keep a major attack force out of 1401. The addition of fast ships in AO makes me drool with anticipation as an alliance player, and sweat bullets until turn 4 as a coalition player.

Thanks in advance.

I didn't try it in my last game as the Coalition's defense made it seem impossible. I probably won't try it in my current game for the same reason. Both my Coalition opponents were/are very well prepared for the Expedition so I skip it and take consolation in the fact that their turn 3 assault will be a bit lighter due to their paranoia.

Yet I wonder if I'm being too timid. I've seen the Expedition succeed here on the boards every single time it was attempted. Makes me wonder...

Has anyone ever failed with the Expedition?
I shoved a Hydran THR into the planet at 1611. It met up with a Kzn force that drove in from 1605 (happened to be left as the only BATS alive on the border other than 1805). They reversed direction and moved back toward Kzn territory but ended up having to fight there way back (supply issues).

The Marquis got attacked (and 1605) and 2 turns later the ships were back in Kzn territory (1405 or so) but had not crossed into the fed border but probably would have. The game was abandoned at that point so I dont know for sure.

John, I think the reason two expeditions got through in the present games is because the Coalition player was ill-prepared to defend against it. I know in our game (Back to the Front) the Coalition player did not set up his southern forces to defend against it (his FtF opponents never bothered trying so he was not used to defending against it) so we walked through. Not sure the exact reasons for the success of the other one, but I do believe it was a similar reason.

Defending against the Expedition isn't necessarily hard, the defenders just have to be aware of the possibility.

It takes practice as the Coalition to watch for it. In my present game, I'm playing the Coalition, and for turn 3 - I locked down both possible expedition routes. However, I was so pleased with myself that on turn 4 I didn't. My opponent decided not to try it, but it was there is he really pushed.

It's a matter of experience on both sides.

OK,

question for the Board.

As the Alliance, when would you use all your ships offensively, leaving few (if any) for a Reserve?

If I could destroy a starbase cheaply by pinning most of his fleet and reserves away from it.

If I could get at an FRD park.

If I could knock him off of an important planet that would cut at least a portion of
his fleet out of supply.

If it would somehow allow me to get into a coalition capital with enough force to devastate a few planets.

If his repair capacity was overwhelmed and I could create alot of battles.

By Robert Padilla (Zargan) On Friday, June 13, 2003 - 12:45 pm: Edit
You forgot:

If you just don't have anything worthwhile to defend and have nothing better to do with your ships The Hydrans get to enjoy this situation quite a bit after getting kicked out.

By Joe Stevenson (Ikv_Sabre) On Friday, June 13, 2003 - 12:54 pm: Edit
"As the Alliance, when would you use all your ships offensively, leaving few (if any) for a Reserve?"

I have learned that it is best to ALWAYS have reserves, as the Alliance OR the Coalition, especially if you are playing against an aggressive player. I play against Peter D., and he's really nailed me whenever I scrimped on reserves.

There are SOME exceptions. As Ed Reece said, if you can pop an FRD park or a SB and take little damage in the process, by all means, do it. Another good exception is if you can cut your enemy out of supply (which obviates the need for reserves).

I'm finding that taking the cautious approach has so far saved me a LOT of cripples in "Return of the Dragon(s)". Pete, who normally engages me aggressively has hung back on his turn, 'cause I haven't given him anything worth attacking, and I've had 4 full reserves ready to leap forward if he did attack. The few EP he gained by me abandoning Kzinti space has been more than overcome by the savings in repair/dead ships. The key to this working IMO has been the fully stocked reserves. In fact, on T3, I had reserve fleets stay put (with a few exceptions), and used new production to improve the reserves, rather than just replacing them.

Joe

PS - I'm claiming that tacnote that is the obvious fallout of this information

By Craig Tenhoff (Cktenhoff) On Friday, June 13, 2003 - 01:27 pm: Edit
OK, a bit more information on the situation.

Alliance Turn 4
Kzinti Planet 1504 has fallen.
Neutral Planet 1506 has fallen.
Coalition has reacted off both planets to Pin Kzinti fleet elements moving toward 1307.
Kzinti fleet has reached 1307, which has 2 FRDs, 2 BATS, and a Reserve (now pinned)
Kzinti fleet has reached 1407, pinning the Reserve.
Lyran Reserve in 1105 is unpinnable.

Now, by committing my last 12 ships (3 CV groups, a FFK, a CC, and a SF), I believe I can liberate 1504, 1506 (currently he can recapture during retreat) AND reach 1507, threatening the undefended BATS.

The only locations I need to defend are 1401, 1502 and of course the Marquis. 1401 and 1502 will be covered by the fleet retrograding there after combat. That leaves the Marquis SB protected by the 6 ship garrison, any ships I can spare from 1401 (probably only 1 or 2 depending on how many of our ships are crippled/destroyed during combat), since we currently have ship parity in the Theater. Additionally, the Marquis SB would be protected by the Federation 4th Fleet Reserve.

By Craig Tenhoff (Cktenhoff) on Friday, June 13, 2003 - 01:34 pm: Edit

One addition to the above.

Lyran Reserve in 0809 is unpinnable.

By Joe Stevenson (Ikv_Sabre) on Friday, June 13, 2003 - 01:39 pm: Edit

"any ships I can spare from 1401 (probably only 1 or 2 depending on how many of our ships are crippled/destroyed during combat), since we currently have ship parity in the Theater."

If you have ship parity in the theatre, then I wouldn't worry about leaving all your ships at 1401 so much, nor would I leave ships on 1502 (I don't know that you have, but it seems implied by your message". Assuming that you have a decent number of PDUs on your capital planets, if you've got 2/3 his numbers, he isn't taking your capital, and he really can't pin you there (again, assuming that you have a respectable number of PDUs on the capital planets).

I'm unclear how the 12 ships will enable you to accomplish so much. If possible, a little more detail would be helpful.

Joe

By Craig Tenhoff (Cktenhoff) on Friday, June 13, 2003 - 02:08 pm: Edit

OK, here is the details.

The 12 ships are the last mobile forces the Kzinti haven't committed and would be
split as follows:

1) So the CC+FFK at 1504 to prevent retreat to the planet from 1503 if one Klingon ship dies. 1503 contains a Z-D6, FF, and SF vs a F5L and E4. If neither dies, they can retreat to 1504 (equal ships, shortest retreat path), but will again fight at a disadvantage on the Small Scale Combat Table. A fighting retreat might be possible from the larger battle in 1403 depending on the supply path circumstances, but would then have to continue to 1505. This keeps 2 EP out of Coalition hands (1 for the province, 1 for the planet).

2) SF added to 2*FFK at 1506 vs F5. This gives a +3 modifier, which guarantees victory in the hex on the Small Scale Combat table. This helps my retreat/retrograde paths, reduces Scott's retreat options, and keeps 1 EP out of Coalition hands. Even if I lose this hex, I still have options, so it's not a critical battle, just a nice bonus.

3) 3 * CV vs the BATS in 1507 to reduce repair capability and retrograde paths. Once again, this is a nice secondary target.

Naturally, the two reserves Scott has can influence the above battles, as well as 1403, 1405, 1307 and 1407. However, if he commits a Reserve to 1503, 1506 or 1507, I lose only a FF, FFK or EFF. Committing Reserves to any of those hexes will let me have an advantage at the FRD park in 1307 (since I currently have both a CR and a COMPOT advantage).

The Capital Systems are untouched, due to the ship parity. I will probably be able to pin out all but a few Coalition Ships on Coalition Turn 5, depending on what happens during Combat. I saved enough EPs to rush Escort Production if necessary to boost my ship count by a few ships. (And Tony wondered why I skipped a BC this turn 😊)

Craig,

Are there any Coalition ships at all at 1504? If 1504 was abandoned, then it is no longer a Coalition supply point. This happens immediately if he doesn't leave a garrison ship. If there are enemy ships there, how many does he have, and how many do you have?

An important thing to remember about retreat is that as the phasing player, you control the combat order. You can often achieve the results you are looking for simply by resolving battles in the correct order.

1507 seems like a big gamble. If he does send strong reserve forces here, you may end up losing more than you think, if you show up with only 3 CV groups and nothing else.
Is this game posted online somewhere?

On the surface, I'd say that I would not commit those ships, and would instead maintain the reserve. Or if you do commit the forces, use them in a way that leaves no possibility of failure. There is nothing worse than blowing your reserves AND not accomplishing your goal (well, except getting cut out of supply).

Joe

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By Scott Tenhoff (Scottt) on Friday, June 13, 2003 - 02:26 pm: Edit

It's posted on David Lang's on-line site, under "Brother's War 2"

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By Craig Tenhoff (Cktenhoff) on Friday, June 13, 2003 - 02:54 pm: Edit

No ships in 1504, but if it's the shortest retreat path to another supply point from 1503, so he can retreat there and 'recapture it', since the RDU has no offensive power.

I remember that about retreat and combat order, and as Scott can attest I have used it to my advantage once or twice 😊. I even wrote a Tacnote on the creative use of retreat after one of our early battles.

The Reserves he has are medium sized (70-90 COMPOT range). He's been committing his heavy ships to front line combat or the Hydran Reserves (the Hydran front will be an entire new topic starting later 😊). I don't believe that they have enough COMPOT to cripple a CV group and then kill it during pursuit (the worse case I can foresee for 1507). I see the situation in 1507 as this: I either get the BATS cheap, or he commits a Reserve that would otherwise go to 1307 or one of the planets. Either way, I come out ahead. I lose at most 1 ship (possibly a CLE, since I'll self kill one ship to avoid a pursuit in this case). In return, I've either destroyed a BATS or drawn a Reserve away from another location.

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By Christopher E. Fant (Cfant) on Friday, June 13, 2003 - 03:51 pm: Edit

Hmm, the RDU is not a unit, but it does represent an enemy presence. Could it be seen as a fighting retreat if you go through that hex if there is another hex that is the same distance but with no enemy presence?

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By Bill Schoeller (Biqbadbill) on Friday, June 13, 2003 - 03:57 pm: Edit

Fighting retreat is always voluntary, but if 2 paths were equidistant you would have to retreat to the location that had no units in it. If however, the shortest path led to the planet, he would not be outnumbered and could (regular) retreat
By Scott Tenhoff (Scottt) on Friday, June 13, 2003 - 04:04 pm: Edit

nevermind

By Todd E Jahnke (Tej) on Friday, June 13, 2003 - 11:17 pm: Edit

A RDU is a unit, per SVC's answer to that question of mine perhaps eight months ago.

By Joe Stevenson (Ikv_Sabre) on Saturday, June 14, 2003 - 01:56 am: Edit

A Residual Defense Factor is NOT A UNIT IN ANY SENSE OF THE WORD for any purpose. You cannot "re-devastate" it over and over to rack up plus points; it does not block retreat or pursuit.

All mentions of "Residual Defense Unit" are hereby changed to "Residual Defense Factor". Nick will give me a list of these references to be marked in the master book.

Other recent rulings here...

By Chris Strong (Raider) on Saturday, June 14, 2003 - 01:58 am: Edit

By Steve Cole (Stevecole) on Friday, February 14, 2003 - 07:07 pm: Edit

Hmmmmmm....

It doesn't seem right that you'd be able to retreat onto and recapture a planet. It defies logic. Perhaps a specific rule is required.

Joe

By Christopher E. Fant (Cfant) on Saturday, June 14, 2003 - 02:38 am: Edit

That's what I was thinking. It fits in the current rules, but a fleet that is running away would not stop and take up homesteading on the way I don't think.

By Jeff Laikind (J_Laikind) on Saturday, June 14, 2003 - 02:10 pm: Edit

It's not a retreat, they're advancing to the rear 😐.

But seriously. If there aren't any enemy forces, why shouldn't retreating forces capture the planet.

If the only available retreat point was a planet WITH enemy ships, the retreating forces would have to fight, and could still capture the planet, right? You still have to wait the appropriate time to draw money from it. The huge
benefit in capturing on your opponent's turn is that you can immediately reinforce during your own Movement Phase.

Silly me, the response to my question being thus...

By Steve Cole (Stevecole) on Friday, October 18, 2002 - 10:21 am: Edit

Residual defense unit.

...I interpreted the statement to mean that a unit was a unit. My mistake, sorry.

" why shouldn't retreating forces capture the planet."

Why should retreating forces ever capture ANYTHING?

I don't think there is a historical precedent for this.

Replace the word retreating with the word routing. It may be more clear that way.

Joe

Trouble is, the way the Retreat rules are written, unless you've declared a fighting retreat, you force is 'undemoralized' and no longer routing after you've retreated one hex. This allows running battles to get back into supply, etc.

Given how long a Turn of F&E represents, I can see a force that has been forced out of one hex having enough time to reorganize for battle in the next hex.

Because a turn takes several months. After the forces pull back, they still have time to regroup and deal with undefended territory.

A fighting retreat would be different. There, the retreating ships are passing through as fast as possible.

I've retreated with a superior force (or a portion of a force as the defender) on many occasions. A retreat in F&E is simply leaving the hex - not a rout by any definition. A fighting retreat is a different story, but of course not pertinent since a fighting retreat cannot stay and conquer a planet (since the planet would unconquer itself the moment the fighting retreat continued).
OK, since Craig Trolled for advice, so am I.

Here is the situation: Kzinti space
Hex 1403: 38 Klingons, 32Kzi (mostly pin trash) he'll need to retreat.

Hex 1504, now has a RDU on it, so he is 1 hex from it (it connects to Marquis, then offmap.

He retreats to 1504. I choose 2nd retreat option.

My closest supply point is 1507(3 hex) and 1105(3 hex) from me.

So I would choose 1504 to retreat to also. Thus he's retreating into my hex. So it will in effect, create another battle hex, with me the defender again, and him the attacker.

Correct?

nope

The defender always retreats first, so only he can go to 1504 automatically.

If you are the defender then he cannot go to 1504, you have more ships then he does.

If he were the defender he would retreat to 1504 and you would have to retreat to 1304 or 1404 as it is the same supply distance and it does not have enemy ships in the hex. (You could choose a fighting retreat but with the BIR difference I doubt you would come out very well)

Also he can only retreat to 1504 if it is part of his supply grid, it would be range 0 vs a range 1 for any other hex. (With an RDU there its unclear to me)

Ed,

As soon as the enemy abandons the planet, it immediately reverts to the original owner. So, it now is part of the Kzinti supply grid.

Joe
I do not think it is part of his supply grid again till the beginning of his turn after you abandon it.

So, if you abandoned it this turn, it really is of use to no one till the beginning of your opponents turn.

Right?

By Joe Stevenson (Ikv_Sabre) on Tuesday, June 17, 2003 - 05:44 pm: Edit

Chris,

It looks like I was wrong. See (413.2)

Joe

By Christopher E. Fant (Cfant) on Tuesday, June 17, 2003 - 06:14 pm: Edit

Yeah, ok. Cool, I'm not losing it 😊

By Bill Su (Wsu) on Wednesday, June 18, 2003 - 02:50 pm: Edit

When would you all recommend using direct damage against standard (non-heavy, non-Fed-special) fighters? They're free to replace, so I'm not seeing a lot of reason to do this.

A possibly related question is, when would you all recommend not taking all voluntary damage on standard fighters?

By Scott Tenhoff (Scottt) on Wednesday, June 18, 2003 - 02:55 pm: Edit

1) If they are out of supply
2) Limited replacements. Like he only has 1 CV, if you destroy the only fighters, his density goes down.
3) Destroying SE. If, in his retreat, he needs XX Ship Equivalents to go into another battle hex, and destroying those fighters will make a difference
4) Raiding a BATS, if the fighters are reduced below 1 full SE, you can trace supply over it and retro over it

By Joe Stevenson (Ikv_Sabre) on Wednesday, June 18, 2003 - 03:41 pm: Edit

Bill,

Scott pretty well hit it. The key thing is, what are your objectives in the hex? In some instances, you aren't concerned about doing damage to your opponent, but minimizing your own. IOW, you want him GONE. Once your oppnent is out of fighters, taking out the rest can keep him from hanging around and crippling ships. While it normally is advantageous to make the enemy cripple his ships instead of taking fighters, but if he's scoring 50-`00% more damage than you are, then you'll lose that exhange, and it will get worse as time goes on. Taking
his fighters down will likely hasten his retreat.

Note that this only works well against the Kzinti and Hydran, whose fleets are built around fighters.

Joe

Scott and Joe:

Please bear with me; I must not be understanding something here. Doesn't letting the defender take the damage at full value do those things too?

Please note: I haven't actually played the game yet (I'm hoping to play some solitaire in the next few weeks). It may be that lack of experience is leaving me unable to visualize the details here.

Bill

Both sides will voluntarily lose fighters to a point, but are unlikely to lose all of their fighters until they are ready to retreat. The reason for this is that the ships which carry fighters are more effective in combat if they have their full complement of fighters.

I believe what Joe is saying is that, once the opponent has lost most of his fighters voluntarily, it is sometimes worth while to eliminate his remaining fighters to get him to leave.

Tony

For example:
The Kzinti have a bunch of carrier groups defending a SB, but are down to 30 fighters.

If you let the damage fall (as the attacker), he could cripple a carrier group or 2, bring up the replacement group, and not lose compot.

If you direct on the fighters, he won't have the cripples, but his compot will drop the very next turn.

Doing this 2-3 times, and in the first case the Kzinti may have several crippled carrier groups - but still has the same compot. In the 2nd case, he's out of fighters and will either have to retreat or cripple carriers anyway.

Joe
to get him to leave."

Exactly.

Bill,

One of the things that the Kzintis love to do is lose their fighters at a carefully controlled rate, while crippling their escorts. The rationale is that the longer they can stay and fight, the higher the price they can make you pay to destroy their bases, especially when the loss rate is in their favor. So, the longer the battle, the better for them. Also, via CEDS, they can retrograde after combat to get their carrier groups to repair facilities, allowing them to then form a credible counter attack.

The rub comes in that one they lose their fighters, their compot drops substantially, which lessens the damage you will take. Also, they might not be able to resolve all of their damage on escorts if there are no fighters. Kzinti commanders are usually hesitant to cripple their non-carrier ships, as these ships will be unavailable for a counterstrike (or the next Coalition attack). Hence, if they run totally out of fighters, they typically leave. If you can force their hand, so much the better.

Joe

I had a classic case of this just a short while ago. The Romulans were attacking a Gorn starbase, with plenty of defenders (and the Gorns had the money to afford lots of repairs afterwards). However, the Gorns did not have a single carrier in their force, and so only had the 12 fighters of the starbase.

First thing the Romulans did was fry the 12 fighters by directed damage. Gorn compot drops by 12 points immediately. The battle lasted another 11 rounds, so that was a total drop of 132 points of firepower during that time.

I wasted 12 points of damage (24 to direct, but the fighters would have absorbed 12 anyway, so it's only 12 extra damage points), but I avoided approximately 40 points of damage in return (132 x 30% average).

Good deal!

What would you think would be the optimum compot for removing an undefended BAT or SB?

BATS: the Stevenson magic number 32.
But that (Stevenson magic number) was pre-2K and led to 2-3 cripples (depending on the number of fighters involved). Now with BATS taking SIDS, 32 can still work but will probably cost another cripple.

36-40 will usually pop it in a round if you go high BIR.

It takes 22 to pop a bats in a round. The front has 3 SIDS 4.5+4.5+4.5=13 add in 6 fighters and you get 19, the back has 6 factors but you only need to score half of that so 19+3 = 22 A force of 44 could kill it if the BIR was 10, to get it in one round at an average damage of 30% you would need 74 compot. Now realistically if you can score 19 the 6 compot on the crippled side will not accomplish anything so 63 is probably a good compot to hit a BATS with.

I have a chance to kill 3 lyran bats and the SB at 0608, my phase of turn 1, (he has no reserves)

It will leave a sqd of 1DN 2BC 1CC CV CVL 2CLE 2EEF DF SF unable to retrograde from 0608 tho, do you think its worth the probable loss of those ships to kill the SB+FRD on 0608?

that's a lot of ships to loose, but if you can tag a lyran SB on turn 1 it hurts as well. the lyrans use every conversion they have for a long time and loosing one will put a crimp in their plans (not to mention the missing repair capacity)

now when you say that you will leave those ships unable to retrograde, what are the chances of them making it home on turn 2 (some will be lost, but all of them?????) if he allocates enough ships to prevent that size fleet from making it home it's probably worth it becouse that will tie up 3+ times their numbers that won't be available to attack you for a while

is there any way for you to use a convoy or supply tug to keep them in supply so they can retrograde?

James,

If you do that, you may have left your own SBs undefended for the turn 2 assault. As the Coalition, I'd gladly lose the 608 SB in exchange for an easy kill of the Counts/Duke's.

Edward,
BATS take 3x 4point SIDS. So, your numbers are almost right, but it only takes 21 to kill the BATS.

On the BATS busting question,
As the Coalition, I'll send ~40 compot including a FV fighter group and a "G" ship (F5G/DDG). Worst case, I'll cripple the FV+E4A & CEDS repair. Best case, I'll only take fighter losses. Normally, it's close between 0 & 1 cripple.

I have a convoy to supply, but not a tug, and a convoy is not a retrograde point :-(((

James,

The loss of the Starbase at 608 presents no problems for the Lyrans other loss of one conversion.

Now, the RC or EB starbases are a different issue. If you could tag the RC starbase, that will leave the Lyrans a little weak on the repair front.

However, getting that many quality ships cutoff on turn 1 will mean doom for them and at least one of your starbases, and the CApital could be in danger as well.

In my opinion, you should not attack anywhere that you cannot retro from on turn 1 (and is a generally good idea all the time)😊

Yes as I almost found out in "Brother's War".

Got the FRD park, but got cutoff from reaching 1401 with part of my fleet since its now 7 hexes away after all the various retreats (blasted RDU's not blocking retreat 😊 If I had known that, would've had a FF back it up).

Fortunately, I can retrograde back to 1202 and 1502, so the Capital is fairly safe.

Killed the SB+FRD+2CW at 0608 for the loss of SF+FF, Fleet is still in supply cos I moved a convoy, but could not retrograde. remaining Fleet it DN CC CVL CV 2CLE 2EEF SF and 2 crippled BC. turn 2 should be intresting.

Hmm, those three core units(DN,CC,CV) and their support vessels out of range for defense on turn 3 will probably mean either 2 dead starbases and a capital
raid, or 1 dead starbase and a major capital assault.

By TimLosberg (Krager) on Wednesday, July 02, 2003 - 11:04 pm: Edit

depending on how the rest of his fleet is covered, he may be able to defend one of the SB's and still put a decent defence force in the Capitol, he might get away with just the one SB dead and a Capitol raid if the dice gods smile on him (also depends on Coalition positions.. since he was able to launch a succesfull deep strike I'm guessing the Lyrans are already forward deployed...

By james robertson (Mordak5) on Thursday, July 03, 2003 - 01:30 pm: Edit

Lyrans have 2 fleets at 0403
and 1 at 0803

klingon player has a fleet ar 1307 and 1107
so no capitol assault turn 2 I dont think, baron fleet will be available turn 3 so I sould manage, and you never know the Lyrans cocked up allready so I might save the fleet yet

Lyrans Killed 2 crippled BC's and the SF only.

they also killed the BAT at 0701 and missed the SB at 0902

The Klingons Killed the BATS at 0605 1405 and 1004 only

my phase turn two starting

By james robertson (Mordak5) on Sunday, July 06, 2003 - 07:02 pm: Edit

my phase i killed the klingon SB (North) and a FRD, lost a few BCs but not much else. It was undefended and I managed to pin most of the klingon reserves.

By Scott Tenhoff (Scottt) on Monday, July 21, 2003 - 03:38 pm: Edit

What is the incentive to take it, until all the ships on it are gone?
By Bill Schoeller (Bigbadbill) on Monday, July 21, 2003 - 04:15 pm: Edit

If your opponent leaves 15 ships out on the first fleet SB I would leave them sitting out there and take advantage of the fact that he is missing hulls at the capital defense; however, there are disadvantages to leaving it there. If he loses the capital he can retreat to that SB rather than off map. From this position he can do much more than just harass from the off map zone. His ships are always in supply (partial grid/ on SB), and he can attack a multitude of Klingon (or Hydran) targets. Second you will have to fight the entire Hydran navy a second time. You fought hard to knock him off the capital, and this time will be just as difficult except there will be no pdu's (or LAV SAV presumably) present. You will still have to burn through at least 100 some odd fighters which means at least 4 rounds of combat against large Hydran lines. This does pose a problem for the Hydrans, as they will have a hard time getting off map after this, but it makes things difficult for the Coalition while they hold the SB.

If the 15 or so ships that are on the 1st Fleet SB are all frigates (or some small compot force), I would attack this base to force the Hydrans to have nowhere on the map to harass you. If however they are the standard big ships that blew a hole in the Klingon lines to get the Exp Fleet through I would certainly ignore them.

By Pete DiMitri (Petercool) on Monday, July 21, 2003 - 05:08 pm: Edit

Joe took out the Hydran Capital while leaving the 1st Fleet Starbase intact in Maelstrom.

He's made it clear in our conversations that he will never do that again.

By Craig Tenhoff (Cktenhoff) on Monday, July 21, 2003 - 06:22 pm: Edit

The fleet at the 1st is a mix of a couple cruiser hulls (CC/CA), a UH group, and a pack of DDs and FFs. The Klingon South West was lightly garrisoned, so I didn't need to much to blow through and head Eastward (North Eastward was too heavily guarded though).

They are there for a few reasons this force is here:

1) Closest 'Hard Point' to retrograde too (BATS don't count, since they are too easy to blow up)
2) Position to relieve the Expedition if necessary (i.e. The Expedition could be a feint after all).
3) Continue to threaten the Klingon flanks.

Scott also didn't mention that he also ignored the 2nd Fleet SB during this turn's strike on the Homeworld. The Expedition SB is going to be overwhelmed (since I withdrew the defenders to the Homeworld last turn).
Well I thought it was staying to my plan, to make sure the Capital was gone before taking out either SB.

Lets just put it at that.

And Craig's favorite D6G is at the Exp. SB, to try some more SIDSs, since it did 2 to Hydran BATS already.

(edit) I changed my post, while Craig was posting below)

10~12 ships? I left 4 in the vicinity of the SB, just to help disrupt supply lines, plus they couldn't get anywhere "safe", due to their starting positions. The rest Strat Moved to the Home Worlds.

Okay, I need help planning my Hydran defense. Quick summary: its my retro end of T4, I can pretty much retro to anywhere since my whole fleet (-9 cruisers) just fought at 0514.

There are about 110 Coalition hulls on 1214 and ~12 each on 1417, 0511, 0513. Now my problem is how do I defend all 3xSBs and my capital? I’m thinking of letting the 1st fleet SB die, putting ~9 crap ships on the 2nd SB and defending the Exp SB with ~12 decent ships...the rest will go to my capital.

I will have one uber-reserve over Hydrax composed of cruisers. I’m debating two other options with the last reserve:
- I can make a caca reserve with 3xCW and some FFs over Hydrax or
- send the 3xCW off map to join the OC fleet in a reserve.

So one more time: how do I defend the SBs and Hydrax? What should I defend them with? What about the reserves?

I'd make 2 balanced reserves instead.

If you fleet is largely intact, I'd defend the SB with a battle line. If the capital doesn't get hit in force, then you can send the reserves to save an SB.

Joe
I agree with Joe.

Assuming the OC squadron is released, then send the CWs offmap to form a reserve there and also a good reserve in the capital.

Put a medium line on each starbase and hope for the best.

Yeah but if I defend each SB with even 10 ships then about half my fleet is outside Hydrax ... that would be a bad thing right?

I guess what I'm really trying to say is how many ships should I leave in the capital when the Coaltion has 120 that can hit it?

I'd say between 8 and 10, all of FF and DD variety.

Christopher, I assume you mean 8-10 small ships at the SB, not at the capitol

Well, of course........unless you let the Coalition place them for ya, in which case you should just put them all in the OC now

My two cents would be to defend the Klingon border SB, and maybe the Expeditionary SB, but let the Lyran go. You need the Klingon SB to make it harder for them to bottle you up and ignore you.

In our game, I was giving the Coalition player some advice on possible builds. I pointed out that the Lyrans could convert FF to DWS at each SB. He did so the first turn, but then asked the question why? The SC is 2 EWP as is the DWS. Other than slightly more durability (3-6 vs 2-5 if memory serves), why would you bother with DWS?

Why to bother with DWS?
- Can build a FF at each outlying SB & convert to DWS for 2.5+4=6.5. Building a DWS straight out would cost 6. For only a 0.5 EP penalty, you turn a FF into something useful.
- You don't have to worry about getting DDs back from the front to convert
- DDs are efficient damage absorbers already - DWs aren't. In many (some at least) cases, it's better to have 3xDD in your Battle Group than 3xDW. FFs will
probably never see a battle line (permanent province raiders...)  
- Save the DD for double conversion to CWS. Single step, 5 point, minor conversion...
- DWS has variable EW. Either 4-6* or 2-6**. You get to see what the other sides line is & what BIR choices are before you have to give the final number (sometimes handy).
- Once the Lyrans do a couple turns of converting FF->DWS, the Alliance becomes despondent about ever matching EW production, and doesn't bother to direct on Lyran scouts any longer. (same applies to SC, but due to logistical reasons, the DWS is easier to arrange)

By Edward Reece (Edfactor) on Monday, July 28, 2003 - 09:45 am: Edit

John, Id make as good a reserve as you can in the Hydran off map box. No way to get the other reserve off map? too bad it might get pinned in the capital but thats the way things go. Anyway put at least 3HN on the starbase your leaving undefended that way you still get to pick a BIR and you can send a reserve to defend it if you want. I like trying to save the Lyran starbase because it can be defended from the off map box with reserves.

By Christopher E. Fant (Cfant) on Monday, July 28, 2003 - 12:20 pm: Edit

Actually, I would go the other way, defend the 2nd and the Exp if you are only going to defend two.....but you really should be defending all three.

By Pete DiMitri (Petercool) on Monday, July 28, 2003 - 12:24 pm: Edit

If there are 120 ships that can actually reach the Capital without dropping off at least a few to deal with other base/supply issues, then you should have at least 50 ships in the Hydran Capital (including reserves).

You'll need at least that much to put up capable battle lines at the outlying systems. Letting those systems go too cheaply would not be a good thing.

60 would be better, but 50 is the minimum I would go with.

By Paul Bonfanti (Bonfanti) on Friday, August 01, 2003 - 11:30 am: Edit

Two advice questions about construction and economics:

What's the cost/benefit of going over your free fighter allowance? I tend to use the free fighters and not build many more carriers than that, but I've seen tac notes (most particularly Joe S "Romulans like a good Fight(er)") that say max out on carrier production when you have the opportunity. Thoughts?

Also, do people usually buy the extra prime team? Russ has bought it in both turns of our scenario "East Wind," but I can't see myself spending 5 EP for a unit that essentially adds 2 compot and a better capture chance. Thoughts?
I usually don't buy prime teams, it just costs too much.

Fighters, well the earlier you can buy them the better. It costs 2 EP to repair an 8 point cruiser, thats .25 EP/damage point absorbed in other words if you kill 8 fighters you have saved yourself 2 EP worth of repairs. Repairs are cheaper for most odd valued units (some are more expensive) however. So figure that in order to pay for itself you have to lose a fighter 9 times. So the sooner you build it the more chances you will have to lose it, also if you have a large amount of fighters (like the Hydrans and the Kzinti) you will often not lose the fighters you pay EP's for because you have so many other fighters around.

I would not buy carrier fighters for the Hydrans, nor for the Kzinti after turn 7, the Feds I would buy carriers for until I had what I thought was "alot" of carriers as the Feds start with few carriers compared to other races. The Romulans I would probably be willing to buy a few with and the Gorn I would plan on buying fighters so that I could put out the maximum of 2 carriers a year for at least 5 years.

I dunno. With the Gorn Logistics now in the Game, the Gorn are far less needy of fighters. 2 or 3 goups should be plenty for them and the Free fighters shold cover that.

As for the Feds and Roms, build ALL you can afford

Hi Paul,

for the Roms, the main difference is that their starting fleet has a low density, and their carrier groups actually improve the density of their fleet, AND resolve damage better. This is not true of the Klingons and Lyrans (exception: Klingno CVAs).

Now that FCRs are in the game, I doubt I'll ever build 2 carriers per turn for the Klingons. However, I still will for the Roms, for the above stated reason.

I was thinkning of revising that Tacnote in light of AO to incorporate FCRs and the cheaper cost of frigates and SKs.

Joe

I like Prime Team and will buy one if I have the cash but otherwise no. I will get
them eventually. If I have only 5 EPs to spend I'd rather buy a command point since I can use those for capital assaults.

By Stewart W Frazier (Frazikar) on Saturday, August 02, 2003 - 12:29 am: Edit

Paul, for the PTs, I consider it for the Klingons and Feds due to the large number of ships they build per turn, especially when using them as reserves (enough ships for 2, each having a PT). For the Lyrans and/or Gorns, if they have the money then you have a reserve with two PT ready to go. Hydran/Kzinti/Romulan - may be useful early on (4 extra COMPOs or 2 COMPOs plus the capture chance).

By Christopher E. Fant (Cfant) on Saturday, August 02, 2003 - 12:58 am: Edit

I always prefer 4 COMPOs AND the extra capture chance

By Tim Losberg (Krager) on Saturday, August 02, 2003 - 02:10 am: Edit

Plus the Fed already get 2 at wartime.

By Paul Bonfanti (Bonfanti) on Saturday, August 02, 2003 - 10:32 am: Edit

Thanks for all the advice.

I realize that money spent on T3 is much more valuable than money saved until T10. But is there any value to keeping a "rainy day" fund, or should I be looking to spend my econ fully (on things like more carriers and prime teams) every turn?

By Christopher E. Fant (Cfant) on Saturday, August 02, 2003 - 12:07 pm: Edit

Depends on who you are.....

Fed? SPEND IT!!

Kzinti? SPEND IT ON CEDS!!

Hydran? Save a little (in the OC).

By John Colacito (Sandro) on Saturday, August 02, 2003 - 12:27 pm: Edit

I know this is a totally minor issue but I figured I'd for advice anyway. I have 3 free Kzinti fighters that are going to dissapear if I don't use them so what should I do?

1) Convert an FCR (4EP)
2) Convert my last CVL>CV (4EP)
3) Replace one of my two dead VP pods (1EP)

The first two options both cost the same. The FCR does give me 6 fighters but I probably won't get a chance to use them each turn.

Another CV is nice especially since my shipyard is missing (don't ask) but I waste
that last fighter factor.

The VP pod is the cheapest option and I need the EP but it is kind of annoying using only one pod and it doesn't give my the FCR options or the compot boost of a CV.

How do 3 Fighter factors get you an FCR for 4 EP? Free fighters do not get the 2:1 discount with FCRs, just 1:1 as if they were regular carrier fighters.

Of the options listed I would get the CV.

Should've said *convert* an FCR ... I went back and fixed it. Sorry.

John, you should do the CVL>CV conversion, it still loses you 1 fighter factor though. But you should have already built the FCR. FCR's are cool.

I'd do a VP pod. Even though you'd have an odd number, you can always team it with something else to make an interesting combo (or stick it on a LTT). 3 pin count fighters > 6 non-pin count, especially since you likely won't get to use all your fighters each turn anyway.

For the same reason, 3 pin count fighters > 2 pin count in the CVL->CV. Sure, the CV has a higher compot, but do you really get to use all your CVs on the line each turn anyway?

... and it's cheaper. Those 3 EPs are another FFK...

In my current game the FCR totals are 10 Kzinti/Klingons, 7 Federation, 5 Hydran/Romulan, 3 Lyran, 1 Gorn. The alliance has more and probably always will.

Frankly the coalition would have more except for some monster repair bills and they were one of the things we skipped a few times. Everyones general thought on FCR's is "Mmmm good, me want more!"

Okay, I'm surprised enough that the Hydrans made 2xCFCR but I'm simply shocked that the Kzinti built 7xCFCR? Why? Do you really use all of them often enough to warrant their production?

Yes he does, in any major battles they will all be empty after one of us retreats.
In a couple of cases the presence of the Kzinti FCR's has prompted a coalition retreat after blowing up an FKE. I think the Hydrans have decided FCR's aren't for them.

By James Southcott (Yakface) On Monday, August 04, 2003 - 06:27 pm: Edit
Yeah, well - the Hydran FCR is called the RN....or HR....or LN. Come to think of it just about every Hydran ship is an FCR!

By Christopher E. Fant (Cfant) On Monday, August 04, 2003 - 06:29 pm: Edit
Indeed.

Why would you ever spend Hybrid points on an FCR as Hydran, when you can use the points on things that can actually contribute to combat and pinning.

By David Slatter (Davidas) On Monday, August 11, 2003 - 09:30 am: Edit
Comment on ship maintenance.

I've been thinking of putting this on a proposals thread for a while as something for Ecowar.

Ships of any size cost 0.1Ep per turn to maintain (exceptions, Auxilaries, mothballed ships, and monitors cost nothing). Each race starts with a pre-counted maintenance cost (= no. of ships/10) that must be paid during both peace and wartime.

Seeing as we already do salvage, it is really very easy to keep destroyed ships aside until your next construction phase, and simply adjust then. Perhaps a "destroyed ships" sheet could help keep track (would be also useful for depot level repair).

I really cannot see the problem with this. All you need is a line or two on the Econ form to keep track of total ship numbers, and do a recount every 7-8 turns or so (which is not very often given all the counting for pinning purposes).

Another potential change for EcoWar is to remove some of the abstraction from the supply rules - i.e. actually have freighters on the map maybe. Things would still have to be quite simple, but there must be *something* that can be done that would add interest.

By Christopher E. Fant (Cfant) On Monday, August 11, 2003 - 10:21 am: Edit
Heheh......counting 1000 ships.......yeah, no problem at all.

Hasn't this been proposed and rejected about a thousand times already?

By David Slatter (Davidas) On Monday, August 11, 2003 - 10:39 am: Edit
Chris
Yes.

But you don't count the ships. You merely compute the difference. If you know how many ships you build, and how many ships were destroyed, it is elementary. You take the previous value, say 360, add 24 for you builds, (easily counted), subtract 10 for losses (again, easily counted), and add your captured ships. Occasionally, you do a full count to check you are still correct, but that would not be necessary more than 2-4 times a game. Given that games take weeks FTF to play, and that ship maintenance costs will reduce ship counts, you will easily get the time taken to do this occasional count back in the time saved on pin counting and moving fewer ships.

I honestly think a count like this will SAVE time, not waste it.

By James Southcott (Yakface) on Monday, August 11, 2003 - 12:34 pm: Edit

Would certainly put a hole in the budget of the coalition. After T3 (having built/activated 120 and had, lets say, 20 destroyed) they would be spending 10EP just on maintenance.

It's an interesting idea and would certainly result in smaller fleets. My gut says this is going to adversely affect the coalition more than the Alliance, but without playtesting it is difficult to assess.

By David Lang (Dlang) on Monday, August 11, 2003 - 01:57 pm: Edit

David S, SVC has rejected the running total idea as well

I happen to agree with you, but it's very much a dead horse.

that said if you want to experiment with this I would suggest giving each race a maintenance allotment based on the size of their pre-war fleet (a little smaller for the klingons and lyrans since their Y168 fleets include a war buildup) and only charge for ships above that total.

By Chuck Strong (Raider) on Monday, August 11, 2003 - 02:26 pm: Edit

Just what we need...more paperwork in F&E...

(Maybe someday when the game runs on computers I would support this, but not now.)

By David Slatter (Davidas) on Monday, August 11, 2003 - 08:24 pm: Edit

Chuck. this kind of paperwork is very minor compared to XTPs, and no worse than salvage, drones, conversions, command points, and a whole bunch of other things. While the numbers may be a little larger, you don't have to do any records on it during the turn. Furthermore, ppl are already keeping back destroyed ships
for the salvage count.

I wanted to talk about it here so it wouldn't clog a proposal and be a separate issue - was wondering what the feeling was like out there.

By Christopher E. Fant (Cfant) on Monday, August 11, 2003 - 08:30 pm: Edit

David, this idea has been proposed and rejected at least 2 dozen times. Why waste the time on it for rejection number 25?

By Chuck Strong (Raider) on Tuesday, August 12, 2003 - 12:36 am: Edit

...death by a thousand pin-pricks...

By Andrew Harding (Warlock) on Tuesday, August 12, 2003 - 02:11 am: Edit

The only time I've seen every-turn counting work in a paper game without driving players to distraction was in a german game that had an exact number of pieces and a place for every one at all times. It was a game about oil production and sales, can't remember the name. When selling oil you would just look at the spiral that contained oil barrels 'in the market' (not held by any players) and the price was printed in the space for each barrel that you sold. Very clever system, but completely impractical for F&E.

By James Southcott (Yakface) on Tuesday, August 12, 2003 - 07:14 am: Edit

Deleted - double post

By James Southcott (Yakface) on Tuesday, August 12, 2003 - 07:16 am: Edit

Proposal: Starfleet combat accountants.

By use of the suicide audit, forces opponent count every SE, reconcile his production schedule from T1 and pay 5EP's for the privilege.

Probably need some form of Rules Lawyer for the coaltion, to maintain balance. Each turn one 'may', 'could' or 'must' in a rule can be substituted for the word 'badger'. Nick badger then be consulted to rule on the effect.

By Christopher E. Fant (Cfant) on Tuesday, August 12, 2003 - 02:39 pm: Edit

Hehehehe............

By John Colacito (Sandro) on Tuesday, August 12, 2003 - 02:56 pm: Edit

Strategy question:

Its T5, my Hydrans have about 40EP left over after producing everything bigger than a FF. I have 16xPDU + 2xMB on the homeworld and the rest of the capital is untouched as well. The Coalition is expected to come into the capital without a problem T6 for some devastation not conquest.

The question is what do I do with the extra 40EP?
- build my 4xPDU and save the rest?
- build 3xPDU and convert 2xMB>BATS w/no fighters
- something else?

4 PDU's

By Edward Reece (Edfactor) on Tuesday, August 12, 2003 - 03:00 pm: Edit

4 PDU's

By David Lang (Dlang) on Tuesday, August 12, 2003 - 03:04 pm: Edit
don't waste the money on the MB->BATS upgrades if you can't be sure of
completeing them. the PDU's are active immediatly and gain you an extra couple
turns of clobbering the attackers.

depending on how large teh attacking fleet is and how large your defending fleet
is you may even consider putting a PDU/PDB or two on another major planet
(only do this if you have enough of a fleet to fully defend that major planet)

By Christopher E. Fant (Cfant) on Tuesday, August 12, 2003 - 03:13 pm: Edit

John,

Build 4xPDU for 28 and 3xCU for 7.5 save the last 4.5 for a rainy day.

By Craig Tenhoff (Cktenhoff) on Tuesday, August 12, 2003 - 03:16 pm: Edit

Try 2 MB->BS upgrades instead of the 2 MB->BATS upgrades.

1) Its cheaper
2) They don't require tugs
3) If he comes to direct on them, your Capital Battleforce+Fixed defenses get to
fry his fleet.

I second what David said. If possible, add a PDU to each Major if your fleet is big
enough to offer battle in all three systems. This forces them to fight one extra
battle vs fixed defenses before they can devestate the planet.

By James Southcott (Yakface) on Tuesday, August 12, 2003 - 03:41 pm: Edit

My 2 pence worth

The Hydrans have problems defending the side systems, particularly the minors.
The problem is that the coalition will direct on cruisers. If the only fixed defences
are 2PDU then the 10EP loss of a DG or RN may well outweigh the economic
damage you do in return. Carriers are a good way to fill out your line and force
him to direct on a small hull or the PDU's (or you can just burn fighters). I would
build the CU's and sub 2AH. Convert as many LN's to DE's as you can manage.
Use them to escort the LAV's.

PAL/BT(ad) + LAV+3DE+AH + CVT+2DE+AH +2CR +2PDU has a compot of
105/102 which isn't too shabby, and nothing to shoot at. If you escort 2 LAV's
remember to put the static one at the capital, otherwise when you retreat from
the system the whole group will probably die. This one can still be used at the
capital minor.

Should point out here, I am a believer in carriers for the Hydrans, can't remember
your views on the subject.

Other than that - PDU's. If you believe your opponent is gunning to take the hex
at a later date then build another 3 or 4 on the capital. Once the Hydran capital is
at 20 PDU and 2MB it is probably unwise for the coalition to try to take it. If they
are not converted you can disassemble the MB's later (saving 20EP) to support
your drive on Klinshai

In my experience, the Hydran front eventually becomes a war of pin count,
whether or not the capital falls.

If it does fall, the coalition will try to pin the Hydran Fleet off map.

If it doesn't fall, the coalition will destroy all of the Hydran bases and put a
containment fleet in the vicinity of their capital to keep them from attacking.

In both these cases, CUs+HNs are just as good as any other ship.

Advice for the 40 ep -> I'd build every ship on the list, including all 6 frigates.
Then I'd buy 3 PDUs and a PGB (7.5+7.5+21+3=39). Bankroll the extra ep.

If you build the frigates, they can be used to defend the side systems. They do
not add a lot of compot, but if you add 9 FF's, and a CC in protected, the Coalition
will have nothing to direct on and you will have an additional 45 compot that they
must take while devastating the side system if they were going to take it anyway.
If you have the econ build the schedule first.

If you want the Coalition to enter the capital proper upgrade 1 or 2 bases to bats.
This will force the Coalition to attack when they may not be ready, and direct on
the mb instead of pdu's(taking out 8 compot instead of 36!)

Sandro,

Save, save, save.

You'll need it later.
San,
I would put the points on two tugs and try and send them by op move to the beseiged Kzinti's...you can divert the klinks from stopping them right away by launching a full fledged assault on 1214. The Kzin can also try and retake their HW at the same time thus scaring us, I mean scaring those you are playing against, where mayhaps they will forget about the tugs =)

Mike

2xMB->BS + PDUs. As was mentioned, the BS upgrade doesn't take a tug, and you don't lose as much if they direct. Also, if you last 1 more turn, go for the BATS upgrade (again, tug free).

It's not a great deal, but if they have to direct on them early as opposed to after PDUs, it gains you some more damage.

Build the CUs at least if you can. 2.5 EPs is a cheap price for a pin hull...

Sandro, I was basing my opinion on the belief that they will try and take your capital. PDU's are your best buy in that case. PDU's have an interesting property, especially on home worlds, in that each succeeding PDU is actually more valuable then the one before it so that 20th PDU will inflict as much or more damage then the 19th and much more damage then the 1st or 2nd PDU. In any case spend your money now don't save it. You will likely build AH in the future and having them now as CU's will allow you to use them against the coalition now as well as later. We don't accrue interest on saved EP's in this game so the principle of the time value of money tells me you will inflict much greater hardships on the coalition by spending your EP's now as those EP's will have several turns to inflict loses on the coalition.

4 PDUs and save the rest

maybe convert a LN to a DE

Sandro - The situation has a vaguely familiar sound to it. Are you sure they are coming in? The Dane and Mike, I mean, your opponenets probably don't want to damage their fleet too badly before over running the Feds. I would build the maximum number of hulls and then build as many PDUS as possible. I bet they won't attack the capital itself, leaving you next turn to build the balance of the PDUs.
Sandro,
Depends on what you expect from the coalition.

If you think they are going to try to kick you out of the capital then 4 PDU for 28
1 MB (no fighters) for 7 and 2 FF hulls for 5 = 40. Why the MB, you may ask? If
they are going to come in to kick you out you will force them to come to your
capital this upcoming turn to stop the upgrade and get mauled at least one round
by your 20 PDU's. Could be more rounds depending on his line and where the BIR
ends up. If he does not come in this turn he is going to be running into 10+
electronic warfare every round for a while (1 SB, 4 PDU's, 4 from the BAT, 1 MB,
+???from Scout ships) That extra 3 scout from the BAT will make it that much
harder for the coalition to unshift themselves.

If you don't think he is going to try to boot you out of the capital, then by all
means build all of your ships available and add couple of PDU's to your other 2
majors in the capital to make them harder to devastate and deal out a little more
damage to the coalition.

Thanks for the advice fellas.

Base stations? Why, when I can pay one more EP, use the TGs and get BATSs
instead? No way will they bother with the upgrades.

They just moved 5xFRD to 1214 so I'm pretty sure that they will come in to
devastate the outlying planets and shave 4xPDU off Hydrax. This will hardly
impact their Fed Blitz.

They **will** take Hydrax eventually, they are doing too well in this game not to. I
don't think the $ would be wasted on BATSs unless of course they go after Earth,
in which case I...

I'm not building FFs, they have 40 more hulls than I do, what's the point?

I think I want the 4xPDU and will save the rest for the IC (!) next turn.

The MB->BS upgrade requires no tug if at a planet.

Thus freeing up your two tugs that would of done a MB->BATS upgrade for use as
BT/CVTs
Being able to build the IC next turn is a good reason to save those EP's.

John Smedley (Ukar) on Wednesday, August 13, 2003 - 05:07 pm: Edit

John -

Every FF you build will tie up an additional Coalition hull to keep the Hydrans contained. Since they can't possibly build ship equivalents cheaper (except POLs, and they have limits), you will likely be forcing the coalition to use more valuable hulls.

Craig Tenhoff (Cktenhoff) on Wednesday, August 13, 2003 - 05:08 pm: Edit

John,

2 BS = 20 COMPOT, 4 EW
1 MB + 1 BATS = 20 COMPOT, 2 EW

Both take the same overall damage to destroy (60), but the two BS give 2 more EW.

As Scott said, MB->BS upgrades don't take a Tug, so that frees up one more ship to use for overall defense and opens up a command slot in the Capital System, since there is no Tug performing an upgrade that must be placed in the battle.

If you're sure they're going to try and devastate the outline Majors, add at least one PDB to each to force an extra round of combat before they can devastate them.

David Lang (Dlang) on Wednesday, August 13, 2003 - 05:40 pm: Edit

also if you are sure they will actually hit hydrax to trim 4xPDU then you want to max out the PDU's that are there to punish them for doing so. if they spend 3 round there to kill 4xPDU, 2xMB->BS they will suffer ~30 cripples (or 20 dead ships). if they don't stick around to kill the MB-BS conversions then next turn you will replace the 4xPDU and be even better off.

by not putting a low compot tug in the battle force you can put in a cruiser and do another point or two of damage.

remember that you can leave the LAV unescorted. if you use it over the capitol and he directs on it you just traded it for a LOT of cripples. the same thing can apply to unescorted carrier tugs. you can easily hit 400 compot for the first few rounds of combat.

Mike Mascitti (Lokiwormtongue) on Wednesday, August 13, 2003 - 11:43 pm: Edit

Speaking as the aggressor in this game I can say (honestly this time) that there is a plan to take out Hydra by turn 12 at the latest. And that we will be going into Hydra turns 6-12 as necessary to strip away and purge what defenses exist. Now if this knowledge helps you give San advice so be it. Yes, like the bad guys in
movies, I reveal our plans for universal domination.

I'm sorry, but what rule exactly says that the tug has to be in the battle force? I was suggesting MB->BS to get another Battle Tug or Carrier tug, not to save a command slot.

(510.232) specifies that the Tug must be present when placing the MB. However (510.3), which is the relevant section for base upgrades lists no such requirement.

Note, (433.41 A) says "The tug can not move during the turn, but can participate in combat..." (my emphasis) - not must.

And Sandro,
The CU at 2.5 EPs is no worse than the Lyran FF or Kzinti FF. The HN sucks, but the CU is merely averagely bad...

But don't forget that HN's convert for 1 point less than CU's do to HDW's...so I wouldn't say they down right suck you just have to be patient. Granted though you can build a HN and convert it at the SB you build it at late in the game so you don't necessarily have to keep them alive or be forced into thinking that you need to build them early so that they are around for the late game.

HN->DWE for 2+1 ep!

(Of course by the time this conversion is allowed, you'll probably only have 1 or 2 SBs left.)

Here's the situation

The Count's SB is under attack by a combined Coalition force of 71 ships. It is defended by 40. The key units are as follows:

Lyran - DN, 3xBC, BT
Klingon - 2xC8, D6M, 2xD7A
Kzinti - DN, 2xCV groups, 46 fighters (excluding SB)

The Lyrans are setting up a MB in 0802.

How hard would you defend the SB? I am thinking that I should stick around as long as possible, crippling ships as necessary, obviously killing all the fighters,
and only scoring voluntary SIDS towards the end. My thought is that I can put off a serious raid on Kzintai until Turn 5 (it is turn 3 now) if I can cripple a large portion of these forces. I will have 20 PDUs on Kzintai this turn, and a MB set up effective next turn.

Would you accept the approach battle? Would you direct on his scouts? He only has three - D6S, DWS, SC. I'm not sure if he will try to use the D7As, but if he does not, I don't see directing on anything else.

"Would you accept the approach battle?"

How many fighters do you have? How many does he have?

Can you WIN the approach battle rounds?

Can you nullify the stasis, either by construction of your line, or via EW shift?

Joe

I would not accept an approach battle.

I would score 2 voluntary sids on each of the first 2 combat rounds, then start self crippling (don't self kill even the FF's) then fight until all of your carriers are crippled and a few of your other ships, make an assessment about how much damage you can do by crippling the rest of your fleet and what damage you will take, then decide on fight or flight. Personally I would fry the two C8's and any scouts I could.

The D6S in this case should be a priority target. Assuming you have a good scout (Scout Tug), you're forcing a 1 shift on him every turn, and can manage a 2 shift. 39 is a lot of damage to lose, but if it saves you some damage every turn after that, it could be worth it. Only do this if you can generate 39 on the first turn or 2 ...

I have 46 fleet fighters + 12 on the SB. He has 0 fighters, so all his damage will be real.

I could win 1 or 2 approaches, though they are not sure victories. In other words, he can put up a heavy line that I could not match. Doing so would have me most likely putting up inferior lines in front of the SB.

I can put up a line that only gives him CL, FFK, or FF to target with the stasis. He
will have EW advantage as long as the D6S is around.

If I can kill a C8, I will, but unlike an earlier fight where he only had 1 CR 10 ship in the hex, I won't waste 36 just to cripple it.

I am thinking that the 27 just to cripple the D6S might be worth it if I can't kill outright.

John,

True. If you're playing to win, 27 for the cripple may be about the same. That'll force more cripples on him, and you can always hope for pursuit.

Ouch - 71 ships with no fighters. That should be painful...

Avoid approach.

It would be better to face D7As backed up by the SB EW than in open space without an EW shift. You can't afford to take extra ship losses. Remember, the Kzinti SB can generate 6EW and still have 18 COMPOT. That's enough EW to nullify a D6S AND a D5S! If you have your own Scout, you might actually be able to force a shift on the Coalition.

If you can do the 27 to cripple the D6S early, I'd recommend doing it. If you do, you can eliminate any EW shift against you and try and force a EW shift on the Coalition. That could add another round to the battle, which means more crippled Coalition ships. Another option would be to DD any Scouts that appear on the line to try and force an EW shift.

I'd try and avoid self crippling anything but your carrier groups. They'll have a chance to CEDS repair and then rejoin your non-carriers for Counter-Attacks.

What Craig said, skip the approach.

One more thing,

if he does use the D7As, do what ever you can to force an EW shift. It really reduces their effectivity, especially if they go for multiple freezes.

I was able to trade a HR and a KN for two D7As in the approaches to the Hydran Capital by judicious use of Scouts. (OK, so I threw all my best Scouts into the Battle Force (TG+SP, LAS, and PGS) to do it. Now if I just could've rolled higher
than a 2 on the BIR 10 row

"Personally I would fry the two C8's and any scouts"

This is not necessarily productive, depending one what is in the hex and in the theatre.

"The D6S in this case should be a priority target."

If he can then force a shift, yes. If it isn't going to affect the EW balance, then no. What does the Kzinti have for scouts here?

"I am thinking that the 27 just to cripple the D6S might be worth it if I can't kill outright."

Depending on what your scout situation is, this may be the wisest thing.

The reason why you don't want to go hog wild with DirDam here is that with 40 ships vs. 71 and a decent fighter cushion, it is not impossible for you to actually WIN the hex. Even barring a win, you can eviscerate his fleet, which is more valuable in the long run than killing 1 or 2 ships. If crippling his D6S will give him a shift, then by all means do so. As others mentioned, it will have a big payoff that can also improve the damage ration more in your favor.

Given what you've said, probably best to decline the approach.

Joe

"I'd try and avoid self crippling anything but your carrier groups. They'll have a chance to CEDS repair and then rejoin your non-carriers for Counter-Attacks."

Depends. What portion of his fleet in this theatre does this represent? If his ZTO forces are neutralized, it is worth a few cripples beyond CEDS. Pete did exactly that against me in RotD, and it cost me an extra 2 rounds and 10-12 cripples to take the Duke's SB. The key things are

1) repair capacity in the offmap
2) finances
3) the Coalition's ability to recover
4) Coalition forces in theatre.

Joe
By John Robinson (John_R) on Friday, August 15, 2003 - 10:57 pm: Edit

The Kzinti have little EW capability here - 3xCLD and 2xSF (plus the SB). The tug in the hex is carrying VPs. By crippling the D6S, I can assure a -1 shift against him with the SB, SF in the scout and putting a CLD on the line in a BG. Of course, that exposes the CLS, but if he wants to freeze that, then fine by me. I'll trade a CLD for a D7A.

I'll definitely decline the approach battle. He has enough ships for about 4 or 5 battle groups. He would just take the damage on a BG and then come to the SB.

This fleet represents about 25% of the overall Kzinti fleet. I have the SB and 2 FRDs offmap. The turn I would be repairing these ships, I will not be building PDUs, but will want to upgrade the BATS colcated with the Marquis SB to a second SB, meaning that my econ will be limited. Plus, that turn (4) is a DN turn (I think).

Thanks for the input guys. We'll be fighting it out tommorrow. I'll post the results over in Training Day.

By Joe Stevenson (Ikv_Sabre) on Saturday, August 16, 2003 - 07:22 am: Edit

"SF in the scout and putting a CLD on the line in a BG"

If you have 3 CLDs, put a CLD in the scout box. In fact, I might hold out the CLD on the line and wait until AFTER the D6S is gone. Then put TWO CLDs on the line, for a total of 7 EW. You can then dial up a TWO shift on him with the SB. You then have NO fear of the D7As.

You have time with the BATS upgrade. You can put that off until T4.

Joe

By Dave Whiteside (Ytside) on Sunday, August 17, 2003 - 10:37 am: Edit

Well, I have now found out that I am not only playing John R, I’ve had the whole F&E Consortium advising him....well, now that I’m finally here, I think I can remove this protruding object from my backside, and narrow these odds. It's actually humorous reading these discussions the day after we fought this battle.

As you predicted this battle was particularly bloody....for everybody. The SB fell, but only after 15 rounds of battle. I was using 2 DDGs early, but one got crippled (no surprise) and the other got its G factor destroyed...so, with that wonderful rolling, I had to do it the ole fashion way. After the SB was crippled, I counted ships and determined that maybe I would do the Z more damage by playing the cripple game. Econ is not an issue for the Coalition on repair, and I have several FRDs in place to get 'most' of the cripples up next turn. Anyways....after you read the specific results John posts, you all can decide how smart/dumb that was.
Originally, with the marines, I was planning on making this only a 6-7 round battle......marines.

hey, feel free to ask advice here as well, we are perfectly willing to help both sides 😊

Advice is not quite right I think....opinions perhaps. BAd to ask advice from us. 😞

Probably a silly question, and not exactly a game breaking decision either way, but what should the Tholians build for their PWC 'free' Spring hull?

Does everyone just default to the DN? Any sense to loading up on the BW?

Has anyone played the GW scenario long enough that this question is not actually a moot one? ;)

Well, you already get that BW+PCE each fall. The DN seems the best choice.

Is that true? I must be misreading the AO OOB. To me it says that you get one PC each turn, and then each Spring, after turn 8, you get one ship of your choice.

Do you get a free BW+PCE each Fall as well? Is this errata I missed in CL26, I haven't ordered that yet.

My bad, ignore me, I should not post while doing other things 😐

No worries. I guess build the DN is the best answer, no need to try and get fancy.

Maybe just one more BW so you get 12 fighters out of 3 groups for pinning purposes.

That is not a bad idea.

I agree that the DN and the BW are the two best options for this, but I would choose the BW based on price (the BW is 13.5 points) and the fact that two BW
can be converted into a CVA, the best density ship the Tholians have prior to the arrival of the 312th.

Converting two BW into a CVA is the best way to build this ship, as the Tholians have so few Free Fighters that converting from a CA or subbing for it is just outrageously expensive.

By Bill Sheely (Bsheely) on Sunday, August 17, 2003 - 08:21 pm: Edit

Great point about converting 2xBW into the CVA. I never thought of that.

By Dave Whiteside (Ytside) on Tuesday, August 19, 2003 - 10:12 pm: Edit

Lang,
I appreciate the offer....I know we're all about helping each other....now, what I find ironic, is that each of the last two years at Origins, and maybe longer than that, an interest in some sort of espionage aspect in the game be explored...I'm sure you've heard some of this. With everyone helping everyone, it appears we have plenty of espionage on these boards....just an observation.

By Dave Whiteside (Ytside) on Tuesday, August 19, 2003 - 10:33 pm: Edit

What's the peanut gallery's opinion about how much of a ship count advantage the coalition needs to go in and strip PDUs. Right now the Z HW has 20 PDUs (ouch!!!!) and about 120 ship equivs (approx)....with about 85 coalitions bearing, it appears to this novice that this aint enough to do anything constructive....how about the outer planets?

By Christopher E. Fant (Cfant) on Tuesday, August 19, 2003 - 10:41 pm: Edit

Well, to win a Capital hex as the attacker, you need at least 2-1.

85 to 120? You won;'t even get into the capital....this is not good.

By Greg Ernest (Grege) on Tuesday, August 19, 2003 - 10:48 pm: Edit

I've been looking at the Romulans in WoF recently, and have noticed a few things that I wanted to share and see what other thoughts were out there... especially the crew who played at Origins.

The Roms only start with two turns of KR maint. left. This will run out by the third turn of the scenario, which is when the Roms gain X-tech. Unless they want to pay for Orion shipping of KR maint., they cannot convert a KR hull to X-tech.

It seems odd to me that a FH can be converted to X-tech, but the SP cannot (unless you upgrade it to a FH first). I understand that no CW's can be upgraded, but even in the case of the Gorn the CM cannot be directly upgraded, just like the HD.

Please note that the SK cannot be upgraded, but the SEH can be...
I love the fact that the KEX is the cheapest X-ship conversion that the Romulans have. Too bad they need a second SBX at some point to really take advantage of this.

It's also going to be tough for the Roms to decide what major conversions to do. Do you convert CON -> PHX? or the above mentioned KE -> KEX? (It's not a major conversion, but assuming that Remus' SB doesn't exist, the SBX at Romulus is remaining place to do major converions.)

Of course, the PHX can be built through two minor conversions (CON -> ROC -> PHX) but this will take two turns.

I've been looking for ways to boot the fleet and continue to keep the Alliance away from Romulus. XTP will make up a good portion of their remaining economy at this point in the GW, so maximizing its effectiveness (along with PF deployment) is the way to go.

Any thoughts?

By Tony Barnes (Tonyb) on Tuesday, August 19, 2003 - 11:42 pm: Edit

85 should be enough to strip off the outer planets if you can get into the hex (ie, you started adjacent, or the Kzinti didn't react out for some reason).

You may want to go in for 1 suicide round at the homeworld to strip off some PDUs - but you'll lose a full battle line.

By Bill Schoeller (Bigbadbill) on Wednesday, August 20, 2003 - 11:59 am: Edit

I always assume that if you go into a stocked up capital, you will cripple 10 ships per round when you scrape off 4 pdu's. This is a crass over simplification, and dice rolling and number of plus points can influence the total needed dramatically. But if planning to decide if you can win a hex with superiority(not SIDS), I would plan to cripple 50 ships, and then check to see if you have 50% more ships than your opponent. If the Kzin have 120 ships the Coalition would need 180 to win the hex, after the Pdu's are all gone, so the Coalition would rquire 230 total ships to have a shot at winning the hex.

Of course, the Kzin should react off of the capital with at least 85 ships equivalents to pin hte Coalition out of the capital to completely protect all the entire homeworld, and then use your 35 extra ship equivalent to strip the Klingon of most of its northern holdings.

By Christopher E. Fant (Cfant) on Wednesday, August 20, 2003 - 06:42 pm: Edit

Also, remember that in those really bad fights over capital, while you may end up with 20 Minus points, if the Alliance rolls well and they destroy your entire
I just love fighting in capitals.

Speaking of capitals, here's my current situation:

There are about 100 Coalition SEs in the Hydran capital right now, turn 6, against my 70 ships and ~160 fighters. All planets are untouched and Hydrax itself has 20xPDU plus 2xMB being converted to BATS.

They "only" have 2xD7A, D6J, 2xD6S, 2xD6M, MD5, and 3xD6D for specialty ships. The battle hasn't started yet. Any defensive suggestions?

any other scouts then the 2xD6S? (besides Drone ships?)

With that many defenses at the capital, I'd consider putting the some/majority of my static forces at Anthraxan & Hydramax. He can't take the hex with only 100 ships.

Say, 12 good static ships in each of Anthraxan & Hydramax. 11 static at the capital (plus auxes).
The remaining 35 mobile ships should be enough to keep good lines at the capital if he actually tries to go there, or to put up 2-3 rounds at each of the outlying systems.

I'm not sure approach is worth it, you don't want to face dual SFG cruisers with nothing but open space at your back.

At the minors, it might only be worth putting up trash lines for extra compot, but the majors - you can put a serious hurt on him for his audacity

Tim, only 2xF5S. A Lyran scout-TG, 4xDWS, and 2xSC are occupied elsewhere in the theater.

He has 100 SE and you have 70 Ships + 160 fighters(27 SE)= 97 SE total? Could you have pinned him out of the capital? I would definitely take the approach battle. This sound like a pinning battle to me, and I do not know if he will stick around for long. Do you think he is planning to stay? I would accept the approach battle and attempt to defend my planets from this incursion. (I would expect him to fight one round and run away). Put up a mostly carreir group line if you expect
him to put up the stasis, and trade fighters for cripples. Are these the only ships he has in the area? I would direct damage any stasis ship or maulers you see, but would not direct on the D6S's or D6D's unless he put them on the line, and attrite these specialty ships down when possible.

By John Robinson (John_R) on Tuesday, August 26, 2003 - 03:20 pm: Edit

This sounds more like a raid to bait you into defending the outlying systems. If you don't, he'll gladly take down those systems for a few cripples. If you do, he'll probably ignore the PDUS and hurt your fleet.

By Robert Padilla (Zargan) on Tuesday, August 26, 2003 - 03:29 pm: Edit

How many heavy ships does the Coalition have in the hex? So far out of 100 ships, we have 13 listed as specialty ships, and most of them scouts/drone ships. If there are few heavy hulls, make em pay! And with those odds, I think you should accept approach and wear down the fleet a bit. That way if he does want to come in and play he'll be starting with even less to stay around with. He may be looking to just get a cheap minor devistated, so if you just let him in he gets that.

By Tim Losberg (Krager) on Tuesday, August 26, 2003 - 03:29 pm: Edit

Kill the D6S asap, that will put him at a severe EW disadvantage and reduce the damage he is doing.

I agree with Bill, this does not sound like a full out assult, maybe a raid on the outers, Take the approach offer and make him pay for those outers, If you can hit the scout before he gets to the Planets, all the better.

By John Colacito (Sandro) on Tuesday, August 26, 2003 - 05:10 pm: Edit

Tony, thanks for reminding me to spread out my static into other systems! I had already planned my static/mobile split and had forgotten to do so.

Bill, I couldn't pin him out as he had 20 more ships while in 0717 some of which split into a substack to 0718 before the rest came in. There were also about another 30 ships that hadn't moved yet and only later departed for the Fed border and 0416. My ships also include about 10-12 that will retreat/arrive from 0718.

Pinning battle? I dunno. At the least I’m thinking they want to bag the minors since they’ve been such bitches in depriving me of EP. At best they also want to shave 4xPDU off Hydrax. He has about 120SE total in the whole theater. Of note are a couple of BCs, one D6M, a TG-scout and 6xDWS/SCs elsewhere in the HTO. I’m not so crazy about the carrier-line and approach. Wouldn’t I be better off over my minors?

JohnR, I think you’ve got the best guess so far.

Rob, maybe only enough beefy ships for one really good line, he also has: 2xBT, 4xD7C/CC, 3xD7, 11xD5...Hmm, maybe it is only a pinning battle?
Tim, it's not an all out assault but I don't think it's just a pinning battle either, it's somewhere in between. I need 39 to kill one of the two D6S which means I'd have to put up the cruiser line and possibly pick high BIR. If he uses the 2xD7A I won't wind up directing on the D6S anyway.

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**By Douglas E. Lampert (Dlampert) on Tuesday, August 26, 2003 - 05:48 pm**

All IMAO:
You fight the approach because:
1) It lets you use up some ships/fighters that would otherwise be in the static force in one of the systems he does not attack. He cannot attack everything with that fleet, so he will avoid at least a large part of your static forces, ships he would avoid that fight in open space are good for your defenses.

2) Your intent should be to cripple as many of his units as possible in exchange for fighter losses, that means LOTS of battle-rounds, so you need to fight approach every time he offers so as to burn more fighters.

Normally I hate empty bays in a capital defense since they make killing PDU easier, but he is not going to take out your capital this turn. And you really want him to be running from your capital just as your fleat is reduced to only about 18 fighter factors for the pursuit round.

You can afford MORE rounds than he can, if he wants those planets he needs to fight in front of them for long enough to kill them whether or not you accept approach, and you will have some sort of line each round. The approach damage is extra in addition to the planets not instead. So a carrier line approach costs you nothing but factors he otherwise would not give you time to lose, and some outer escorts.

**By Tony Barnes (Tonyb) on Wednesday, August 27, 2003 - 02:44 am**

Also, the only targets that I would consider directing on early are the D7As. Otherwise, let the damage fall.

They can't win the hex, so will be facing a pursuit battle. Make sure you get up to the 9 Coalition cripples before you start playing DD games.

**By Robert Padilla (Zargan) on Wednesday, August 27, 2003 - 09:27 am**

Well, if the Coalition isn't bringing in that many heavy hulls, then you'll have at least even COMPOT, even over the minors. With a cruiser heavy line, you should really outgun him. Therefore, for the Coalition to get through the approach, they need to out COMPOT you. I'd say take approach with whatever carrier line you have, and wear down what few heavy ships are there now. After then if he comes in, you can really punish him for it.
I'm still not sure I'd take the approach.

At any of the other battles at systems, you'll know exactly where the SFG ships are & how much EW is present for the Coalition. You can load up your line with the appropriate scouts & ships to offset that.

In approach, it's a crap shoot. If you go low compot, no valuable targets, high EW (hoping to face the 2xD7A line), the Klingons may have picked a standard line. If you go all cruiser, you may face the SFG/Mauler combo. Assuming the Klingon doesn't want any chance of failure, you're looking at potentially 4 frozen ships. Can you afford approach? Isn't it worth him retreating after a declined approach anyway - that's 100 of his ships that did nothing useful this turn...

Where is the crap shoot? You assume being out ComPoted on approach is bad, it is not, you want to take casualties on fighters, since he is unlikely to kill 160 fighters in this hex the fighter loses are free, no cost at all.

Everyone who has advocated approach has advocated using a carrier line. You will not need those carriers over fixed defenses, that is where you will put up your cruiser lines. The purpose of approach is to burn more Hydran fighters. Low ComPot vs. a standard Klingon line is FINE, it is a WIN, you take almost all the loses on fighters, he takes it on Cruisers!

My compot will suck with the all-carrier line in approach:

LB(Adm), 2x(TGV+2xDE+AH), 2xTR with 2xPT and the 2 fighters from my scout-TG = 88 compot

What's the point? I loose some 30 fighters and maybe they cripple a D5+F5Q. Now they get a free round over one of my majors (or Hydrax!) without minus points. Not cool.

Even if he deploys stasis I still won't bag a D7A as long as he keeps a penal on the line. No, I am NOT using the PAL on the line since I only have two and it can be crippled for a mere 26 points of damage.

One last important question, I'm going to fight this battle later tonight, do I use my one and only precious command point?

You don't think that's good enough to bag a stasis cruiser? With a penal ship on the line, you still only need 19 points to kill the D7A even with a D6J sacrificing itself. With an 88 point battle force, all you'll need is 22.5%.
By Paul Bonfanti (Bonfanti) on Wednesday, August 27, 2003 - 04:40 pm: Edit

Sorry, it's 20 points, but you still only need 22.5%.

By John Colacito (Sandro) on Wednesday, August 27, 2003 - 04:47 pm: Edit

They won't use the stasis on the D7A so I'd need 24 to kill it, 29 with an F5J and 32 with the D6J. I'm not doing that with 88 compot as I can't pick high BIR with only have 32 fighters on the line.

By Robert Padilla (Zargan) on Wednesday, August 27, 2003 - 04:50 pm: Edit

John,

Don't waste the CP, it does not sound like you need it, and whatever system you pick it for will probably be avoided by the Coalition anyway. Why not use the PAL in approach (formation), put up both CV-tug groups, 2xTR (or maybe KNs), and then 3 cruisers. Sure now stasis has a shot, but the odds of losing more than 2 cruisers this way is small. I'd say at least use the PAL as flagship and use as many DDs and CRs as you can, anything to do a little more damage. And if he decides to maul/crip the PAL in formation, then you didn't have to worry about stasis. Hydrans can't hide in fear of stasis, you have to face it sometime, so might as well make it hurt.

By Alan De Salvio (Alandwork) on Wednesday, August 27, 2003 - 04:56 pm: Edit

I would save the command point, I don't think he is planning on staying long (not enough coming).

I would fight the approach, set up an Alpha line for the first approach round (keeping the PAL in the form box), and then go to the carrier groups for the second round. Talk it up like you are going to bleed him with carriers and then surprise him with the cruiser line. At worst you lose a couple of ships, at best you sting him severely. Barring a mauler or stasis kill, I would let the damage fall in the approach (get them on pursuit, so save a fast ship). Done correctly, this turn can save the capital for two turns. You WANT him to come to your planets where you can hurt him more (complain about how vulnerable those converting MBs are!). Definitely take all the damage you can on fighters in the approach to maximize your flexibility in mobile force.

By Tony Barnes (Tonyb) on Thursday, August 28, 2003 - 10:47 am: Edit

Saved the CP for another time. Admirals give you an effective CP in any battle you'd really want to fight anyway (assuming you've got at least 2 here).

I'm assuming your carrier force is only 2 TGVs (since I seem to recall your hatred of UHs & indifference toward CVs). If that's the case, you've got to put ships on the line anyway to fill in the battle force. Doing so (even if just TR, KN, LN) exposes those to SFGs for no real reason.

Assuming your 88 compot line above, if you end up facing 2xSFG+Mauler, there
are multiple bad things that could happen. If 4 ships are frozen with 4 attempts (almost a 50% chance of that outcome), best case is you lose 2xAH+2xTR. In return, you kill 2xD7A (or maybe D7A+D6J, maybe just a D7A). While the stasis cruisers are more valuable, you just lost twice as many hulls - and you can't afford hull losses in open space. If 1 carrier group gets AH+DE frozen (not that unlikely with 4 attempts), the remaining TGV+DE dies for 32 damage with mauler (not guaranteed, but certainly doable). Even if the Klingons don't put up a stasis line, you lose a TR + fighters for fighters & a crippled F5Q or so. As the Coalition, I'd take that trade in a heartbeat as often as you want to give it.

The only alternatives I'd (again, all IMHO) consider is putting up something like LB(adm), TGS, 18xfighters (fed forward), 7 assorted CR/CU/HN. You only have 57 compot, but nothing of value exposed (of course, then the LB dies for 32 with mauler and you do not much in return).

BTW - I agree with Robert's statement above: "Hydrans can't hide in fear of stasis, you have to face it sometime, so might as well make it hurt" but, I think that the proper way to do it is over your own fixed defenses (as much as possible).

By Bill Schoeller (Bigbadbill) on Thursday, August 28, 2003 - 10:56 am: Edit

John-

I would use the Pal in protected. He can not use the full mauler at a ship in protected formation, so he would need about 40 points to destroy the Pal(18*3 = 54 -10(assuming 5 pts applied from a mauler) leaves 44 to destroy a Pal.

If your opponent generates more than 32 damage you can always take a couple of TR's crippled if he lets the damage fall. You will get to kill the penal ship, and let another 20 or so damage fall on top of that.

We would not suggest fighting this battle if we thought the Coalition was planning on coming into your capital and attempting to win the hex. He can not accomplish this. You have 160 fighters in the hex(not counting all of the fighters on pdu's)! Using 30 of these fighters is a godsend, trading them for coalition cripples. Your fighters cost nothing to replace, and he will have to replace the penal ship and the 4 cripples that you mention which cost 3(F5)+1(penal conversion) + (F5Q+D5 repair=10/2 = 5), or 9 econ for the cost of you might have to repair 1 TR for 1.5 cost!

Observe the Coalitions compot(and targets) before determining what battle intensity you will select. If he has 120 compot and could generate the damage needed to kill the Pal in protected(or some other key target) select a low battle
intensity. If even with 40% damage he can not kill anything usefull, select high intensity(even with a low compt force), and try to kill a stasis ship that is not using stasis. Generally if I have a stasis ship in the line, I will attempt to use it, because I think it will die anyway, and use it to kill a couple of escorts.

Bill

Tony - Why put forward a line in an approach battle that you know has no chance of winning? Instead, just invite him in to play and punish him for his audacity. You can out EW him for a while, unless he puts scouts on the line, in which case he is not doing as much damage. His D7As would probably not even show up over the capital planet because of the EW. The questions then become, if and how hard to defend the outlying planets.

Bill,
I can't imagine that the Coalition would put the Penal on the line unless he had 2xD7A + Mauler there as well. So, losing the D6J (in this case) wouldn't be a great loss (IMHO).

Also, he's worried about exposing his PAL in the form box in approach. If it's direct/crippled, he loses one of his few command ships for the later battles.

Tony

Bill,
Exactly my point! I'm suggesting do NOT fight the approach battle

Thanks for all the advice fellas. Most of you will be disappointed to learn that after much consternation I opted to skip the approach. They did not retreat.

We're waiting for a ruling on whether auxiliary units are allowed to be part of the mobile forces after which I'll give you the results of the capital assault. I'm of course second-guessing my choice...we'll see.

They did leave Hydrax after one round but not before doing exactly 44 points of damage. I now have only one PAL left. The good news is that I will be able to pin them out of my capital next turn. My next "strategy" question:

Can anyone give me a reason not to build a 2nd SB over Hydrax?
John, the only reason not to build a 2nd SB is that you think that they aren't going to try to capture the capitol and therefore it would never get used. In that case the money is better spent elsewhere.

However, it may be that building the 2nd SB is what makes the coalition decide not to try and capture it and therefore saves you the cost of having to rebuild the shipyard, etc.

As for the lost PAL, I'm not sure which turn you are on, but remember that for a 5EP penalty you can build a ship from the next turn's production. If you are pretty sure you will lose the capitol on this turn and would get a PAL next turn, pay the penalty, the extra damage you will do to the coalition for the rest of the game by getting a ship you would otherwise lose forever can easily counter that 5EP.

I realize you said you can pin him out this next turn, but keep this in mind for after that.

What damage did you inflict in return for the PAL? Anything significant die in return (or just a bunch of cripples)?

Don't upgrade the SB. With 20xPDU, SB, 2xBATS (and hull parity at least for the moment), the Coalition won't be coming in anytime soon. The 28 EPs would be better spent on building your schedule - even the (heaven forbid) FFs.

Without knowing exactly what's going on in the game, I'd suspect the Coalition may be willing to just hold off the Hydrans while concentrating elsewhere. If that's the case, your Pin ability is paramount over capital defenses. If you can force the Coalition to divert more resources to the south, it'll help your allies.

Things I'd do before spending 28 EPs on a fighterless SB:

- Build a PAL on your next chance
- Churn out a THR every turn (cheapest pin count)
- Build the schedule (except FFs)
- Build PGC instead of TR/HR (if Y172 or later)
- Build CUs
- Save up some extra EPs for your DW builds (turn 10, assuming you still hold your capital).
- Build HNs

Keep in mind, you should have a turns notice when the Coalition decides to get serious about taking your capital (ie, lots of ships & some SAFs head down there) - you can always do the SB upgrade then. It wouldn't be so bad to do that BATS-SB on a turn you CAN'T pin him out (but he doesn't have the forces to take the
capital). Forcing the Coalition to come in & direct on the upgrade means a free turn of blowing up his whole line. It costs you the 28 EPs for the upgrade, it costs the Coalition (maybe) double that in lost ships in that 1 round.

What Tony said.

From what you say (Feds looking down the barrel of a 250 ship invasion) you want the coalition to try and take the Hydran capital. Building the SB would not only be a waste, but counter-productive. The only point where it would be right for the Coalition to divert the forces required to evict the Hydrans is when earth has fallen. If that happens, with the Kzinti off map the game is over anyway, so you have to assume it won't. Mike is either deluding himself, or trying to delude you with the 'Hydrax by turn 12' bit (the fall of Earth notwithstanding). Don't bite.

Size matters more than quality now. Basically because you already have quality ships and will always be building quality. The Hydrans have got to make themselves obnoxious. What is going to make the Hydrans a threat is making sure you can get your good ships into places the coalition has to defend. What gets ships into target hexes is a high pin count. I would be building everything on the schedule HN's included. Think it was John S who said that sooner or later the Hydran front comes down to pin count, I couldn't agree more. Once the capital is safe, the sooner the Hydrans start going for volume the sooner they will be a real threat. At the very least, every HN you build will be one less ship the feds see.

The only thing Tony wrote which I wouldn't go with is the bit about doing the upgrade when the coalition could get into the capital. If the BATS is destroyed it represents a loss of 45 EP (17 for the BATS) and you can't count on wiping out the whole of a coalition line. I would also put building HN's above saving, equal with building CU's. At the end of the day additional HN and CU hulls are going to see the same amount of combat: precisely none. So the combat worthiness is irrelevant. Each is one pin factor.

BTW did Mike really go into the capital to destroy a PAL, or was it a side system?

I will still be able to build my full schedule, FFs & THR included and upgrade the SB. Does this change anyone's opinion?

The notable exception is the PAL which I wouldn't be able to afford. I've pretty much built my entire schedule turns 3-6 minus a few HNs as the Hydrans have averaged between 75-80 EP each turn.
James remembers my game situation rather well, its Alliance T6, Kzintai is gone and the Feds face a ~200 ship invasion. Hydrax is safe for the time being but they can easily zip 20-30 ships down there to prevent any SB upgrade in the future.

BTW, they went to a minor and I guess would've killed a RN if they had rolled less. I got a D7A and D6J in exchange.

All that cash and you're not overbuilding HN's?

I'd still pass on the SB upgrade.

Build your schedule, get max pin count out, then save the rest.

Make sure to build that PAL - you may not have a chance later and you'll need all the IDs you can get.

Other ways to increase pin count (Hydran edition)...
- sub RN for DG (+1/3 SE)
- sub HR for TR (+1/2 SE - but ick)
assuming you have the money, you might as well 😊

John, you need to maximize pin count AND firepower, I would not build the THR, it is a 12 cost ship but it fights like a RNG w/o as many fighters. I would concentrate on firepower and building the whole build schedule (especially the PAL).

Yes a THR is good pin count but I'd rather spend the extra .5 EP and build a HN. Think about the THR in terms of combat effectiveness, its not any better on the cruiser line then any other Hydran cruiser and it costs 20% more meaning you don't really want to use it in combat and we all know the Hydrans don't have enough cruisers so I would suggest you build something you can use in combat, because you need to be aggrsive if the coalition isn't going to kick you off map. Even if your already building the HN's I don't think its worth it, I don't love fast ships like most other people do.

But if its a choice between a PAL and a starbase I'd take the Paladin.

I faced the same dilemma in my game - "What to do with a (temporary) Hydran
surplus in an enviroment where there is no imediate threat to Hydrax?"

I chose to build my full schedule, then stockpile some ep. Once you can sub a PGC or 4 on your build list, it becomes very easy to spend those extra ep. After turn 8, the Hydrans can build 5 10+ compot ships per turn! Couple that with the ID, and you've got plenty on the horizion to soak up those extra ep.

I still think a fully loaded down capital would finish off (ie, kill) the majority of the attacking line.

The defender would have at least 500 compot. Assuming a 100 point attacking line, if the Hydrans do 150 - the attacking line goes poof (and a 100 point line would have some quality ships in it). That only requires a 30% damage modifier (BIR+VBIR+roll = 9 or better) - certainly do-able.

I'd trade a fighterless BATS + SB upgrade money for an extra round killing off an entire Klingon/Lyran line. Sure, it costs 45, and the Hydrans can't afford to lose even exchanges in general with the Coalition, but it's the ship kills that make it worthwhile (IMHO) in this case. 8-12 dead coalition ships, 0-4 cripple coalition ships, and they don't really do anything to dent the fixed defenses of Hydrax.

This all flies out the window (of course) if the Coalition has the forces to take the capital (then, they don't have to take that first shot to kill the BATS - they can do it later). That doesn't seem like it'll be the case in this game without some pretty substantial warning.

Edward,
I agree to an extent on the THR. I love building them, but realize they are just as vulnerable as the DG/RN they replace (and cost more). However, in this case especially, the pin count will be critical. Every single ship equivalent is needed.

So, John should build the THR AND the HNs. If it was a choice of either/or, I could see your point. If all ships will be built, then it's a choice of THR or save 2 additional EPs for next turn. Would you rather have full schedule including THR + 36 EPs or full schedule (DG/RN instead of THR) + 38 EPs? For the pin hull in this circumstance, it's absolutely worth it.

An interesting side note...
If the Hydrans can build up a substantial fast force (ie, 2xLGE and several THR) based at their capital, it forces the coalition to defend the 411 SB. Assuming the Coalition is staging out of 1013, the path to 411 is mostly clear (and outside of the range of reserves at 1013). 2xLGE+6xTHR could ruin the day for the SB commander... 90 compot including 24 fighters to take losses on.
This is all assuming the Coalition is trying to contain rather than destroy the Hydrans. Obviously if the Hydrans are fighting for their lives, priorities change.

Tony, I would agree, swapping a fighterless BATS + SB upgrade cost for a complete coalition line would be worth it. However 500 compot is out of the reach of even the Hydrans, without a second SB:

180 - for the PDU's,
24 - for 2 fighterless BATS
48 - SB
2 - for FRD's
172 - for 13 ship (using a command pont) line of 2PAL, 2BT, 2LGE, Tug (doing upgrade) 2LB, LAV, 3DG + Scout tug + 2PT

For 426.

430 or possibly 440 is probably as high as it goes. 125-135 damage is probably realistic.

Even if a freak roll gets 150 damage, it would certainly cripple the entire line but not necessarily kill it. If I was facing that sort of compot I would fill the line with 6 DN's/BT's, 6 BC's and a mauler. With the fact the scout can be self crippled as well, 13 ships would be able to absorb that (although a DN will die.) It's a risk cos any more than about 160 and the coalition will be self killing very expensive ships, but that would really very freak ( and then you at least get the gratification of being be able to moan about the rolls). The other way is to put big ships + a battle group - 150 would then mean that the coalition would lose 5 war hulls. Either way the majority of the line stays alive. Course, what's left after pursuit is another matter.

But I agree, a risk only worth taking if the caoltion really do want Hydrax, however as the Hydran I would still only do the upgrade if I couls pin the coalition out. - too much of a risk that I could roll low.

I like the idea for the long range strike force.

Crap - I doubled my compot calculations for PDUs. Sorry - I withdraw all my silly SB upgrade comments.

Ah - yeah that'd do it.
Tony
"So, John should build the THR AND the HNs. If it was a choice of either/or, I
could see your point. If all ships will be built, then it's a choice of THR or save 2
additional EPs for next turn. Would you rather have full schedule including THR +
36 EPs or full schedule (DG/RN instead of THR) + 38 EPs? For the pin hull in this
circumstance, it's absolutely worth it."

I agree with that.

Fighters over PF's

If you have two identical battle forces except one has 18 fighters and the other
has 18 PF's
the PF force will have a compot advantage of 18, if it did an average of 30%
damage that would mean the PF force would inflict on average 5.4 more damage
per round. Each point of damage would cost the enemy fleet .25 EP's for repair.
Round up to 6 points of damage and that would be 1.5 EP's per round. The
fighters can absorb 18 points of damage per round, that stops the loss of 4.5 EP's
per round.

Now there are reasons to want high compot, approach battles for one or perhaps
to direct on a critical enemy unit. However over many rounds of combat during
many turns the fighter force will come out considerably better on an economic
basis.

For example if both sides found they had just enough EP's to build their build
schedule each turn, the PF fleet would quickly find that it was canceling much
more ship production to fund repairs (and PF construction) then the fighter fleet
would be doing.

As a further example, assume each of 2 sides has 220 EP's and it requires 200
EP's for their build schedule. If after directed damage each resolves 360 points of
damage against their own fleet, the fighter fleet resolves 180 fighters and cripples
180 points worth of ships (costing 45 EP's to repair) while the PF force resolves all
360 against PF's costing 90 EP's to replace all of the PF's. Now the PF fleet would
inflict slightly more damage then the fighter fleet now if you assume
(optimistically) that the PF force inflicts 15% more damage then the fighter fleet,
then that is 54 points of damage for the fighter force to resolve costing them 13.5
EP's to resolve damage against 9 CL's, upping their total cost to 58.5 EP's verses
90 EP's). Over the course of 6 turns that means 180 more EP's put into ship
production for the fighter fleet. The fighter force would come off better then this
actually because they would save a few EPs by crippling 7 and 5 compot ships
which would lower the cost of their repairs.
Yup. The other factor though is whether the 'PF player' allows the 'fighter player' to take all the damage on fighters. If the battle is in open space and you have a lot of fighters and I don't (whether I have PF's or just ordinary hulls), I will pick a low BI, direct on an escort and retreat. I just have to make sure I have three carriers in my force and I'll get away with no real damage. There is no point in fighting in open space - one side generally has fewer fighters than the other and does not want to hang around.

IMO the game has become dominated by carriers, FCR's and pin count. Carrier War made carriers effectively invulnerable, AO has given each side the ability to build lots of cheap fighter factors. The main reasons why I would like to see rules to allow more effective directed damage.

With the addition of oversized fighter squadrons, the best choice of course a combination of the two.

One SCS - 1 PF Squadron, 1 Fighter Squadron = 18 COMPOT
One Patrol Carrier - 1 Oversized Fighter Squadron = 12 COMPOT

Total - 30 COMPOT (12 PFs, 18 Fighters)

This lets you take the damage on the fighters, saving EPs needed to replace PFs or repair ships, while your COMPOT is still decent.

Some other things to keep in mind in the PF vs fighter discussion (btw - I mostly agree with you Edward)
- With AO, you can use your free fighters to replace PFs for free also. Most races can get either 12 free fighter factors per year or 48 free PFs (IIRC - don't have my rules at hand). Once the Kzinti have 15 CV groups and 3-4 CVAs, do they need any more carriers?
- The PF group can absorb 36 damage on attrition units, while the fighter fleet only absorbs 18. If both sides let their 35-40 damage fall, the PF fleet takes no ship cripples, while the fighter fleet has 3 CWs crippled. PFs can be replaced at the front line, the cripples have to withdraw to be repaired.
- While 5 extra damage may not seem like much, with big, beefy fleets, x-ship maulers, etc - late war fleets approach the damage necessary to single shot SBs. Those 5 points could make a big difference.

Still, I agree that fighters are almost always the better economic choice. Late war (for everyone but Hydrans), I'll try desperately to avoid using more PFs per turn than I get for free. I won't build many new carriers late war - so free fighter factors become free PFs.
Interdiction carriers have 12 fighter factors.

Patrol carriers have nine fighter factors.

If you go with a three ship CVD group, the 24 EPs that the fighters on the carrier represents will attack directed damage attacks. The problem is that in the late war three ship carrier groups can be directed-crippled by a reasonable fleet with X-cruisers. (The Coalition can do the same with maulers in the mid-war given lots of Lyran BC/DN.) X-shots that can cripple a SB in one go will kill a three ship CVD group.

At one point playtesting A.O., I had an open space battle between a Kzinti and Lyran fleet. The Kzinti fleet I ran had an Admiral, a SCS, independent PF flotilla and a Kzinti/Gorn cruiser line (~160 compot) with only one Kzinti X-Cruiser. I managed to one shot cripple a Lyran SCS group with a SCS, 2xCWE and a DWE.

Compared to a big BCH hulled Kzinti CVD, the CW hulled CVP are even worse off. They have 18 EP of fighters and less defense than a CA hulled CVD.

Of all the CV races, the Kzinti are the best off flying their oversized fighter squadrons with BCH hulled CVD.

The Tholians CV is the worst off with its dinky PCE escorts.

Once the PF shift happens, no one should field a CVD or CVP unless in a battle line unless it is in an extended carrier group with a light carrier group. That, of course, screws over carrier group density versus PFs.

Only the Federation can safely use their CVD/CVPs in the late war inside their CVBG formation.

Everyone else is facing X-mauler destruction.

Trent,

You might want to double check the Kzinti CVD. It is based off a modified BC hull, not the BCH hull.

David Porter

Another strategy question: T7, Fed invasion

About 30 Klingon ships (C8, 2 D7, 2D6D, 6 D5, 10 F5, 4 E4, MD5, F5G, D5S,
3DVS) are based down south mostly on 2517 with no other Klinks available below 1813.

The 3rd Fleet SB is doomed, I'm expecting Coalition compot to almost match mine and I'll be unsupplied/cut off after the battle.

The question is do I set up some of the 3rd Fleet as a reserve down south? Could they possibly save the 7th SB or prevent Orion secession?

By Christopher E. Fant (Cfant) on Wednesday, September 17, 2003 - 02:11 pm: Edit

John, you really need to just sit on the 3rd and roll well. The 7th will always die, there is just nothing you can do about it.

By Mark Sayther (Msayther) on Wednesday, September 17, 2003 - 02:41 pm: Edit

Hi folks,

I'm a first time poster that has been playing F&E almost since it came out. We haven't played in 3 years though, and I have been spending time catching up on rules (bought AO and are in T4 of a game to try out all the new stuff) and reading these boards.

I was curious about some near unanimous advice various people delivered. In some strategy archives of a couple months back somebody asked if he is better off killing a D5 or letting the coalition take the 22 damage and cripple 3 voluntarily when there was nothing significant at stake.

The advice offered was to 'make' the coalition take the damage. My main question is whether or not this same advice applied to pre-AO days, or is this a change in ideal behavior?

The reason I ask this is because my group used to not direct very often. At first glance it seems the logical choice. But after a few games (and a few years) we started changing strategies. In our opinion a steady policy of directing is (was pre-AO) dramatically more effective. Things might look bad over the short term, but after 8-12 turns the advantages will be obvious. We also tested this against 4 other players we knew locally just to make sure we weren't being incestuous in our play style and the results validated this strategy. We were playing the coalition the first time through and although things looked ugly early on, we were assualting the Fed capitol on T14 with 300+ ships against their 170 or so. We probably could have taken all 4 capitols by T17 (We had never softened up the Kzin so that might have stretched out a bit longer.)

So I am wondering if people used to use direction as a policy and that changed with AO (and MA) or if others never played this way. I know the mathematics behind it changed significantly in AO - huge rebalancing in the Alliance's favor imho with more ships on production schedules and starting fleets shifting the
proportional balance of ships significantly in the Alliance's favor, and more costly production schedules and nice things to spend money on may make the economic squeeze strategy more realistic.

In either event, my friends would be looking for some very good opponents to play in the near future. We want to get through 2-4 more turns of our test until we feel comfortable with AO, and depending upon the feedback here play through those early turns again without directing just to see if our policy is now invalidated (we don't think so). But I think we would all be willing to play a direction vs non-direction game if anyone was interested.

Mark,

To repair 3xD5 will cost 4.5 EP.

The cost to replace a destroyed D5 is 3.5 EP (If I remember salvage correct as being 30% or 1.5 EP for a D5).

So from a pure economical perspective, it makes more sense to let damage fall.

Add to this the fact that 2 extra ships are unable to help continue the attack or defend coalition positions the following turn if you let the damage fall. And that's assuming all crippled ships can find repair capacity on the following turn.

The way I play the coalition I would almost consider buying the alliance player a beer every time he directs on a standard warship --- just to show how happy I am.

Edit: I guess my point is that in my mind, AO has not changed the general directing strategy for the alliance.

I have always been in favor of directed damage. That may be why our fleet sizes are smaller then others. As the alliance I like to kill EW-ships or maulers, pick one at the start of the game and pound that type of ship every chance you get, hopefully that will translate into an EW advantage for the alliance later on in the game or will limit the coalition ability to use maulers for cheap damage. I like to kill D6D's, D5S's and D6S's, then I can let the maulers roll for shock.

The cost to replace a dead D5 is 10EP for overproduction (-1.5 for the salvage) If that is not payed, it's one less ship equivalent with which to carry on the offensive. So it is to a degree a matter of perspective. Granted the coalition HAS to pay that 4.5 EP to get those ships back into action, but unless they are so broke that cost would eat into their production schedule, I would be just as happy to take that damage as you would be to see me direct on one of your ships in
I suspect we would be buying each other lots of beers for a while.😊

Mark,

When you were vetting this strategy, what was the coalition response to the directing strategy from the alliance side?

After all, having you win as the coalition when the alliance does not direct, and making the coalition lose when you, as the alliance, direct, might just prove that you're a very fine player without regards to the strategy employed.

I would any day argue that no single strategy wins or looses this game. My recent experience is that a "Kzintai first" strategy wins the game for the coalition, but at the same time I'm longing for my next game as the alliance, to test my ideas for defending against this strategy.

My main objection to having the alliance direct is, that I, as a coalition player, fairly often self-kill ships (to avoid pursuit or to avoid having 100 cripples after a capital assault). Having the alliance direct and spare me 11 points of damage just makes me happy.

Anyway. So many of these general "strategies" tends to fail utterly if they're not implemented properly. And in my experience, F&E again and again comes down to how the detail is played out and how unexpected situations (that weren't part of the plan) are handled.

And I'm rambling about F&E when I should be working.

Peter

Ed,

We do basically the same thing but Maulers first, then big scouts. Sometimes we ignore the crappy scouts though (The klingons can have 100 F5S's for all I care.) But if neither are a viable target, unless we have a critical need to win that battle, we will kill a vanilla hull. We also sometimes direct on *gasp* frigates to make sure we get the ship kill in and to still do some decent economic damage.
I honestly don't recall when we were first testing this. It was probably nearly 10 years ago. When we played against four local people a couple years later (in 1994-1995 I think) we played the coalition first and had the results I described.

When we flip-flopped (they gave up on T14) we did the Hydran cheat (ran a fleet into Kzin space) and the game ended T4. *rant on* BTW - That Hydran gambit is my most detested rule in the whole game. It's a game-ender that just makes me wonder why we started that game in the first place. I know it may be necessary for balance to keep the klingons in a more defensive position and not totally poised for a quick attack on the Hydrans, but if that is it's purpose just change the Klingon fleet setup/release to get the same effect. *rant off*

But that is an example of the alliance not directing and the coalition doing so. You may have a point about the coalition not directing. The alliance is more 'up against the wall' economically and can lose ships off the production schedule due to repair bills.

True, no single strategy will win or lose the game. Bad play can still strand a significant fleet unable to retrograde at a critical time. But assuming no major foul-ups good policies will allow for a cushion that tolerates more small mistakes. And you will make mistakes. This game is just too complex to run everything through perfectly.

Oh, and if you as the coalition were self killing ships then I would reconsider directing. And I would buy you a bottle of fine scotch each time as you are doing my job for me.

Mark, so do you guys even direct when battles are close?

IE, the Klingons do the Duke SB stomp.

They send just enough to kill it, lets say ~240 COMPOT verse 120 Kzinti ships + SB.

If the Kzinti's are directing every round, and the Klingons aren't, the Kzinti's are crippling more ship/destroying fighters/destroying ships at a greater rate then the Klingons.

Thus enabling the Klingons to destroy the SB by taking 1/2 the damage, becuase the Alliance used twice as much damage potential destroying select ships.

And from your tone, it sounds like you only direct to kill, never direct to cripple (unless you want to drive the ship away, ie CV group)
There are certainly times when something is critical and we don't direct such as final capital assaults. However, even in close battle we will usually direct - again unless the consequences are dire if we lose the battle. But our threshold for dire is very high - losing a capitol prematurely, stranding a large fleet to be chopped up out of supply, etc.

To take your example as the Kzin - if the Klingons were not SIDS'ing I would still direct. I would take as much fighter damage as possible and take a bunch of damage to the starbase, take a few cripple ships as damage and hope to get 7 or 8 ship kills out of it using little but fighters and SB self-sids (or maybe stick around long enough to cripple out many of the efficient odd numbered ships.) In my opinion the Klingons would have taken much more damage that way (7-8 dead ships) than by killing none and making him spend money on repairs.

We do sometimes direct to cripple, but it is pretty rare. Sometimes you will take out SB fighters if there are no replacements, or some other important ship (say a single 4 EW scout that you can only cripple and when you expect a long fight), or most frequently, when the die rolls were bad, your opponent has lots of fighters and you didn't do enough damage to kill a ship.

Last game I played as the Alliance we almost never directed. Two things happened because of this:

1) By turn 7 the Coalition was overloaded with repairs and had to skip a significant amount of production and conversions in order to try and fix the backlog.

There was hardly a turn where scores of cripples weren't sitting idle in the rear due to lack of EPs and/or repair capacity. Seeing a significant portion of the Coalition fleet out of combat was a very cool thing.

All this occurred in a game in which the Coalition player was being less aggressive than what I normally see, the situation would've been even worse if the Coalition was doing its usual capital assaults etc.

2) The Coalition actually reached a saturation point and stopped buying big maulers and scouts. So in the long run the Alliance eliminated some Coalition specialty units *without* wasting precious damage by directing.

In fact my opponent second-guessed himself and wondered if he would've been better off not wasting so many EP on D6M, D6S, STT, DNL, etc not to mention
that second Lyratan SB.

My last question got drowned out (except for Chris) thanks to the old "to direct or not to direct" argument. I'll re-post one more time and beg for some more advice. Apologies for the repetition.

Deja-vu: strategy question - T7 Fed invasion

About 30 Klingon ships (C8, 2 D7, 2D6D, 6 D5, 10 F5, 4 E4, MD5, F5G, D5S, 3DVS) are based down south mostly on 2517 with no other Klinks available below 1813.

The 3rd Fleet SB is doomed, I'm expecting Coalition compot to almost match mine and I'll be unsupplied/cut off after the battle.

The question is do I set up some of the 3rd Fleet as a reserve down south? Could they possibly save the 7th SB or prevent Orion secession?

John, I would just try and hold 2306. At least put a task force on the starbase, you can take damage on the starbase and retreat with no cripples. After the battle you should be able to get into a fight and in supply on your turn that way you can retrograde to your own bases.

John, can you find a spot to set a reserve up that won't be pinned? If so, by all means set a reserve up there.

If not, you could set up a small reserve on a side BATS to divert forces there (to pin) or perhaps reinforce the 7th fleet starbase via reserving. Having the 7th fleet starbase survive for a while can really cramp the Coalition by diverting forces from the Northern theater - the southern half of Fed Space truly is a separate theater that should be maintained.

Another thought is to assist the 3rd fleet in surviving by placing the reserve on a BATS north of the 3rd SB, since several retreating stacks have a chance of opening supply for each other. But that is probably a road to piecemeal fleet destruction.

Directing to destroy frequently has always confused me. What is inherently wrong with crippling the opponent? In most cases, crippling three D5s is superior to destroying one.

1) Economically superior, even with scrap.
2) Helps win the battlehex faster (removes more combat power than one kill)
3) Assists on your following turn by removing three ships from the opponent.
instead of one (unless they are field repaired, which you should like anyway).
4) Can contribute to overwhelming the opponent's repair capacity and/or available funds, which can cumulatively reduce the opponent's war machine.

The last point, which is the strongest in my mind, will work on the Coalition. I always delay attacking the Feds for this reason, since I am always saddled with a huge repair backlog from the Kzinti and Hydan campaigns. As a Coalition player, I really prefer you to direct on me, so I don't see how it is a good strategy. I don't mean it is definitely bad, I just don't see how it is superior. By the way, the Coalition can win using many strategies, it is the Alliance that has to be very careful. So I am curious if the Alliance has great success with this strategy.

By Robert Padilla (Zargan) on Thursday, September 18, 2003 - 01:43 pm: Edit

John, I suppose it may also depend on how many ships can you defend the 3rd with, if you send help to the 7th? The 7th Fleet has like what, 12 ships in it? So, if the 3rd fleet can spare 8 to 10 ships to help, then the 7th should be able to hold, as your not facing a massive fleet there. However, if doing this would weaken the 3rd SB defense too much (i.e. not allow you to take your pound of flesh for it), then I would not send the 7th any help.

By Mark Sayther (Msayther) on Thursday, September 18, 2003 - 02:32 pm: Edit

John,

I would base it on if you can make an unpinnable reserve group somewhere. If, no matter where you put that reserve he can detaqch a pinning force to keep it out of action at the more important starbases, then by all means do that. Presumably any spot in the 3rd fleet zone that could reserve to the 7th could also reserve to the 3rd making it an easy choice.

Assuming you cannot find a spot that can't be pinned, I would look at who has to pin it. If there is spot that can be pinned only by those 30 ships that are poised to attack the south, it may still be worthwhile. Forcing him to divert 10-12 ships from that 30 might be enough for you to hold on to the 7th, and any Fed SB that can survive the first assault will be a blessing.

If neither of those are the case, I would be inclined to just plop them on the 3rd fleet SB and as Robert said make sure you extract your pound of flesh.

Lastly, sorry to rehash an old argument about directing vs. not directing. I was mostly just curious to see if the changed situation in AO converted any old DD proponents into non-DD players. Since that doesn't seem to be the case I will continue with my ingrained baises towards directing until they get pounded out of me.

By Jimi LaForm (Laform) on Thursday, September 18, 2003 - 02:52 pm: Edit
As the Alliance player I will rarely if ever direct on an enemy ship unless it gives me an immediate hex superiority (his only CR10 ship, his only scout or only hi EW scout etc). I need my damage to fall to slowly overpower his ability to wage war.

Concurrently, when I play the Coalition, I again will not direct against the Kzinti's as they can only put up a max of 18 fighters a round. You need him to either get rid of his fighter squadrons plus one or 2 cripples a battle round. Against the Hydrans I will almost always direct on a cruiser or a destroyer as he will often have 30+ fighters per battle round. Against the Feds, it really depends on that particular battle fleet.

As for the 7th/3rd fleet discussion: It is best to save one SB if possible as long as you do not give up the other SB lightly. The Coalition must be made to pay hi casualties for every major defensive point they hit.

By Craig Tenhoff (Cktenhoff) on Thursday, September 18, 2003 - 03:19 pm: Edit

As an Alliance player, I tend to limit my directed damage attacks to key units (in a hex or theater depending on what the enemy has), preferring to let the Coalition build up a back log of cripples.

While this does allow the Coalition to increase their fleet sizes somewhat, at a certain point they are either skipping builds and/or conversions to repair ships.

Also, by overwhelming the front line repair points, the Coalition is forced to move ships at least one turn to the interior repair points. This effectively eliminates the ship for one (or more) extra turns. If the Kzinti/Hydrans can keep this up, and keep building as many ships as possible, they can maintain ship parity (or near parity), which will allow them to pin the Coalition out of their Capital.

In my current game, its now Coalition Turn 6 and the Kzinti capital still hasn't been raided, due to the limited Coalition ships in the theater. While some of this is due to my opponent's focus on the Hydran Theater, some of it is due to the number of crippled Coalition ships (and the destruction of some of their forward repairs points).

By Christopher E. Fant (Cfant) on Friday, September 19, 2003 - 02:59 am: Edit

Ah, the never ending debate as to when to direct and when not too.

There is not hard and fast rule, and if you ever start directing on a regular basis you will lose the game because you have become predictable and your opponent will use that against you.

You must take each and every situation on its own merit and decide what is best for current situation. Saying "I will always direct on this or that" is foolish, as there are times when it is appropriate and times when it is the wrong thing to do.
The best directing strategy for the Alliance is to never do anything on a regular basis and keep the Coalition guessing at all times.

By Robert Cole (Zathras) on Friday, September 19, 2003 - 06:35 am: Edit

Quote:

The best directing strategy for the Alliance is to never do anything on a regular basis and keep the Coalition guessing at all times.

Something Chris is fairly good at.

By James Southcott (Yakface) on Friday, September 19, 2003 - 07:38 am: Edit

F&E lends itself to mathematical modelling very well (yes I'm a spod) 😊. 

What matters are the number of ships multiplied by the number of turns a side has those ships - ie "ship turns". If anyone is in doubt then think what would happen if the coalition built no ships during the game but had all the ships it would have built during the game, in the starting OOB. Ships built on T1 are more valuable than those built T2 etc - works just as well for ships killed.

- a ship that is crippled and repaired next turn is out of action for half a turn - three ships = 1.5 ship turns lost. If it is not repaired until the turn after than it is out for one and a half ship turns (3 ships = 4.5 ship turns lost).

A ship that is killed is out for the entire game - If it is killed T1 then that's 35 ship turns.

It's not quite as straightforward as that so I'll save people the problem of telling me so, but it is pretty close. In order to justify letting damage fall you MUST end up interfering with the coalition's build schedule in order to inflict the losses you could have achieved by directing, in another way.

Whether this can be done depends greatly upon the coalitions tactic - if they are aiming to blitz the alliance (WWII German style) letting damage fall can be effective against his strategy - because he is banking on momentum. If the coalition goes for an expanding to a perimeter (Jaspanese style) then it will be much less effective. Here a delay in the time table is not a disaster so he runs his cripples at the level the economy can cope with and still build the entire schedule.
Conclusion - neither approach is necessarily right or wrong (although flipping from one to the other and back again will be weak) - attack your opponents strategy.

By Alan De Salvio (Alandwork) on Friday, September 19, 2003 - 11:34 am: Edit

Nice mathematical thought construct James, but it ignores the reality of objectives. As a Coalition player, I am trying to conquer three capitals and hold them simultaneously. If I succeed, I win, and the number of ship-turns you cost me is superfluous. In fact, killing my ships enables me to achieve my objectives quicker. Killing my ships (instead of crippling three times as many) actually gives me more available ship-turns during the critical first period of the war, the first 15 turns.

By Edward Reece (Edfactor) on Friday, September 19, 2003 - 12:49 pm: Edit

Not true Alan, if he kills a ship on turn 1 he has cost you 14 ship turns, crippling 4 ships would cost you probably 8 turns at most.

By Tony Barnes (Tonyb) on Friday, September 19, 2003 - 01:03 pm: Edit

I'll 2nd what Alan posted.

The ShipTurn thing is an OK way to look at it, but I'd also suggest that a ship available on turn 2 (and killed on that turn) is more useful than a ship on turn 15 (and killed on turn 15). The game can (not always, but can) be won or lost in the first few turns.

Basically, the way I look at it is that I'm (as the Alliance) inflicting greater economic damage (which eventually translates to ship count) by letting the damage fall than by directing. If the choice is crippling 15 Coalition ships every turn or killing 5 every turn, it may be a close thing. However, in many cases it will be cripple 45 or kill 15. Those 45 cripples (in addition to what you did last turn, and will do next turn) put such a strain on the Coalition economy that they have to skip builds, or at a minimum adjust their build schedules (ie, not as many specialty ships, more base hulls).

By Alan De Salvio (Alandwork) on Friday, September 19, 2003 - 01:47 pm: Edit

Ed. After one turn, it costs me one his way versus three the way I don't want him to. After two turns, it is two versus three. After three turns, it finally breaks even at three versus three. Multiply this by the number of ships that are in combat, and you see the difference. It is very significant in the short term when the Coalition is attempting to conquer (the attrition game is totally different).

By James Southcott (Yakface) on Friday, September 19, 2003 - 04:22 pm: Edit

Nice mathematical thought construct James, but it ignores the reality of objectives.

Alan - not at all. taking the three capitals by mid game is the Blitz - We are
agreeing with each other: if your opponent is going for that approach then crippling his ships slows him down and in the end, because he is over heating his economy, will mean he must skip builds. However if he is basically aiming to outlast the alliance by taking territory & maybe the Hydran capital, then the best way to win the initiative back sooner, is to wear away at his hull superiority by directing.

My point is that the question 'is directing at coaltion ships is a good strategy?' is unanswerable. It depends upon your opponenets play. This is why different people have different strategies - they are usually up against opponenets for whom they have learnt the correct approach.

So is there a forum more appropriate than this to solicit people to play an e-mail game?

We would be willing to play either side and test some of these theories that are being thrown around.

And does anyone have a good solution to die rolls when playing via e-mail.chat?

There is a section "Looking for F+E Opponents" in : http://www.starfleetgames.com/discus/messages/30/128.html?1062812065

Someone discovered that AOL-IM you can roll dice in the window.

Calling ChrisF, you found that didn't you?

Thanks Scott,

I haven't plyed SFB in eons and didn't think to venture back to the root of the discussion board.

Indeed, you must use a chat window, not just the straight IM,

type the following

roll-dice#-sides#

so

roll-dice1-sides6

will get you a random number from a 6 sided die. IT works great!!
I have a TG situation I’d like to poll people on.

Question: Should I begin deploying a MB around Hydrax?

Situation: My friend and I are playing Cold War to get him back into F&E (first time for him with MA and AO, but we did play with 2K + CV + SO a while back). We've adopted the more "balanced" withholding of the L-Far Stars and K-Home Fleets. I'm the Hydrans. It is Alliance Turn 1. None of the Hydran SB have fallen yet and I've put 14-15 hulls on each (3-4 cruisers and the rest DD and FF battlegroups) so I have 20-25 hulls on Hydrax (RESVs). Total hull counts are:

- Hydran 73 (95 SE)
- Lyran 72 (76 SE)
- Klingon 102 (111 SE)

I'm just curious as to whether it is worth it to try and put up a MB for the ComPot and EW when it is possible he will try and kill the Homeworld on T2C. I built a TG this turn and I figure the other 4 TGs will have a BP, 2xVP and a SP. We're going to play tonight (Mon) at 10 EDT.

By Tony Barnes (Tonyb) On Monday, September 29, 2003 - 01:15 pm: Edit

It depends on what the Coalition has in range of the capital.

The Coalition has roughly double the SEs you have (and 2.5x the ship count). That's probably enough to take down the homeworld, but it depends on what kind of quality they have and what they can actually get into the capital.

Regardless of whether you try for the MB setup, keeping only 25 hulls at Hydrax is too tempting for the Coalition. With SB+12xPDU+25 hulls, they can almost certainly take down your capital. I'd leave (at most) 5-8 ships on each SB (excepting perhaps 716).

By Bill Schoeller (Bigbadbill) On Monday, September 29, 2003 - 02:31 pm: Edit

The MB is very nice to have completed at the capital; however, it is very vulnerable (and compot depressing) to be setting it up when you are being attacked. I believe your tug (w/o pods) has 5 compot, and still takes a position in the line. This will drop your compot at the capital by at least 5 points per round, and leaves a key fleet unit (the tug) vulnerable without providing any benefit.

The starting MB's will gain you nothing in this scenario, so the loss of these assets are completely negligible. The Coalition will still cripple at least 30 ships stripping off the 12 pdu's that are at the capital, and some more at the outlying planets. So it may not be pointless to put them up.

From the Coalition viewpoint they should strip off pdu's at the earliest opportunity. That will leave them with at least 3 rounds of pdu directing, plus any
rounds spent at the outlying planets. If the Coalition is planning on capturing the capital on this round, they should ignore the non set up base (it adds 5 compot and no ew). If they are softening up for next turn they should probably take out the MB.

Obviously, you can not count on being able to pin out the Coalition. And the base is vulnerable while being set up. If the Coalition directs on the tug while there are still pdu's on the homeworld, I would consider this a victory for you. Your opponent has chosen to fight the pdu compot for another set of rounds.

If the Coalition can win the hex this turn it is a poor decision. Anything less will be a victory for you. The Coalition will take another round of heavy damage, in exchange for taking out the MB (no effect), and a tug w/o pods (a pain). In this scenario there is no reason to take the MB's off map. I would try to set up the MB if you do not think the capital will fall this turn!

By Dale Lloyd Fields (Dylkha) On Monday, September 29, 2003 - 04:00 pm: Edit

Tony and Bill (the people whose messages I can see as I write this):

Thanks for the advice. I think I should say that depending on how things look on T4A, we might continue on with the GW. Okay, (working from memory here) the Coalition has four RESV, maybe 50 hulls out of the range of the capital. So I know that if I turtled, I could keep it no matter what (at least until T3C). But that would allow the SBs to potentially fall for cheap.

As I see it, the Coalition options are:

Hand One: I remember hearing about Pete and Joe’s game (I think) where Pete heavily defended the SBs and was able to cause a world of hurt by retreating to them once the capital had fallen.

Hand Other: The SB are defended enough so that if he goes after them first, I don't think he could take the capital until T4C.

Hand Gripping: I think he could go for the capital and one, maybe two of the SBs, reducing the amount of damage I could do to him over the long term.

This might be a good time to point out he only has one mauler left.

Just as color commentary, the Hydran build schedule for T1A is quite, ah, interesting. Consider that with 68 EPs, I am spending 28 on PDUs, and 18.5 on my schedule, leaving me with 21.5 to blow on overproduction.

Finally, I just have to add that the Hydrans are my favorite empire, and this is the first time I've been able to play them with AO. Regardless of how it turns out, it was worth it on the first turn because I pursued a force of Coalition cripples with:
2xLGE, BT, LB, LM, RN. I just love the Hydran fast DN.

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By Alan De Salvio (Alandwork) on Monday, September 29, 2003 - 04:33 pm: Edit

I would set up the MB on the capital. It does cost you a ship slot, but it only does if he attacks that planet (and that is right where you want him). Force him to come get it.

By John Colacito (Sandro) on Sunday, October 05, 2003 - 09:12 pm: Edit

Strategy Question: How do I make the Hydrans more of a nuisance?

Its T7 in my current game in which the Coalition pursued a very successful “Kzinti-First” strategy followed by an equally successful pounding of the Feds. My guess is that the Coalition intends to simply ignore the Hydrans. Here’s some more background info:

- Hydrax has 2xSBs, the entire capital is pristine, all other BATS and SBs are dead except for the 2nd Fleet SB.
- The Klingons have converted 1214 into a SB.
- Each side has approximate ship parity; 99% of ships are concentrated at Hydrax and 1214, both sides have fought a couple of useless pin battles in the no-man’s land between these two areas
- The Enemy’s Blood SB is dead as are the Lyran border BATS, except for some FF raiding the Hydran-Lyran border has been ignored since T3

Any thoughts? I can move more of the Hydran fleet forward in order to strike deeper but then I risk having Coalition ships enter my capital. I have some offensive disadvantages in trying to deal with reserves (safely based at 1214) and worrying about retro, supply, etc. I’m hesitant to stretch the thin Hydran budget on (mauler-prone) offensive-aides such as MBs, convoys, etc. Finally, any build advice would be appreciated as well.

By Greg Ernest (Grege) on Sunday, October 05, 2003 - 09:30 pm: Edit

My $.02:

* build lots of FF to force the Coalition to commit more pin count to this Theatre.

* build Fast Ships when possible. They increase your pin count and give you a slightly longer harrassment range.

* If you want to go on the offensive, consider launching a strike toward the Lyran homeworlds. It sounds like you have eliminated many of the defenses between you and it. Even just make a couple of feints in that direction, just to maybe make the Lyrans put EP's into defenses.
with 2xSB and full PDU's at the capitol don't be afraid of the coalition getting to the capitol.

don't leave it undefended, but you should be able to take 1/3 to half your fleet and send it elsewhere. if the coalition goes into the capitol they will suffer much higher losses then you will, they won't do it without overwhelming odds.

so if you send a portion of your fleet elsewhere then the coalition will have to start defending against you and this will pull more ships out of range of your capitol, allowing you to deploy more ships against the coalition.

sack the bases within range of your capitol as he leaves them open (he can't have a fleet on all of them that will pin you away

also notice that your compot will useally be higher then his and you have LOTS of fighters available, force him to trade fighters for cripples a lot. don't move your fleet in a single stack, move it in pieces and force your opponent to pin it in several hexes (generating more battles, even if they are only pinning battles) now your opponent may choose to direct on your ships in an attempt to do some damage to you, if he does this start rolling out the all-carrier lines, they don't have as high a compot, but it will still give him grief. be willing to accept a ship being directed on once in a while for the chance to do a bunch of damage to your opponent (with your fighters your damage that round will be limited to a single ship, and you should be able to do quite a few cripples to your opponent in exchange)

if you do risk your cruisers, pack them in for the highest compot you can get (he can only direct on one of them) and try to avoid maulers

If all the Lyran border bases (and the EB SB) are gone, and 1214 is fortified, I'd guess 1013 is already gone. That's it for the Coalition bases in range.

1 option would be to move the ENTIRE Hydran fleet toward 1214. You'll (of course) be pinned out, but then you leave everything that's not crippled forward deployed. He can't get by you from 1214 (since the only 6 hex route is a straight hex row). Each turn, move 1 hex closer. In 2 turns (probably) you'll get in.

However, even when you bag the SB, what does it really gain you? Nothing much. You can't reach anything from the capital, so you'd have to setup a supply tug/FRD combo somewhere forward to reach any important Klingon/Lyran targets. That'll take a couple turns to setup as well. You're looking at turn 10 at the earliest that you can really hit anything (assuming you get into & kill the 1214 SB on turn 9). Then, you'll be able to at least hit some of the southwest Klingon
holdings (and 810 for the Lyrans. Perhaps you'll also be able to take out the SR starbase turn 10/11.

By turn 10/11, it may be too late for the Feds, but I don't really see anything else the Hydrans can do. It's the whole "6 hex Hydrax" problem. Enjoy your 30 extra EPs, improved build schedule, and free PGS's while the Fed capital burns

By David Lang (Dlang) on Monday, October 06, 2003 - 12:59 am: Edit

if you keep building all the SE you can you can either force the coalition to keep allocating more ships to the hyran front (and bleed them as I noted above) or loose the pinning war.

if you can actually out pin the coalition you can start building a base out from hydrax, once you get within range of the coalition planets you can seriously look at trying to capture and hold one. if you can manage this you will suddenly seriously theaten the coalition planets

By Mark Sayther (Msayther) on Monday, October 06, 2003 - 03:15 am: Edit

Concentrating on maximizing ship building and forcing the coalition to commit extra forces down there is the most important medium and long-term gain. I agree with most of what has been said along that vein.

However, if you need to do something extreme to draw attention from the Feds, and are willing to give up having your capitol devestated you can try to strike the Lyrans quickly but decisively. You can create a military convoy at 0416 and move it up to 0414. Move a FRD from the Capitol to 0415. If you are at 1:1 parity currently, you can take half your fleet (or maybe 40% if you wanna be safe) and move it 6 hexes north.

The Coalition may have a hard time getting any ships back to the capitol by non-strategic movements. And if they are pounding the Kzin and the Feds this may be more than probable. With luck they will only be able to get their new production plus 20 Strategically moved ships in on their turn - 50-60 ships.

A lot depends on the absolute size of your fleets. If you have 160 SE you can get 80 into the Lyran capitol and at the very least pound the planets. With 60 on the 'expedition' you prospects are less good.

Another alternative is to abandon your capitol and move all 120-160 ships north. You will be almost certain to be able to take his entire capitol that way. On the second turn of this operation move your FRD and Military Convoy to 0412. When you have finished off the Lyran capitol you will be able to retrograde to this point.

Obviously this has a huge cost, but if you have lots of ships keep in mind that all
the juicy bits of Lyran space are in a narrow band near his capitol. If you have over 160 ships to play with you could challenge yourself to see if you can drive the Lyran economy down to a 60 or less 😊 Is taking the Lyran production schedule out of play and trashing their economy for a few turns worth losing all of yours for good?

Advance toward 1214 with an FRD in tow. Leave the FRD on the Hex row from 1214 to 0617, and retrograde everything to it every turn. You should be able to mostly pin him out of the FRD, and save it with reserves.

Eventually, when you get 2 hexs from 1214 with the FRD, you should declare a supply tug in the Hex with the FRD. This becomes your forward operations base. It is vulnerable, so you must maintain ship superiority on the hyran front to use it - however, if you can do this, then the Hydrans should be able to devastate 1112 and 1504, and really get the Klingon's attention.

I hadn't thought of the "abandon the capital & expedition to Lyrantan" approach. Sounds interesting. It would certainly disrupt the Coalition offensive.

Let's see...
2xSB, MB, 20xPDU at the capital (some assumptions there...)
If you leave behind your aux Vs, around 30 good hulls, and some fighters - you'll be letting the coalition bag the outlying capital systems for cheap/free. However, it'll still be pretty painful to capture the capital completely. In the mean time, your other 100 SEs are marching on his capital. You'll still have your supply point at 215 - which probably can't be hit in 1 turn.

Now, getting back out would be a problem...

In order to be the bleeding ulcer that the Hydrans are require you to build as many battle hexes as possible. With 3 - 5 20 ship fleets you can cause approximately 15-25 cripples/dead Coalition hips every single turn (about 4 - 6 cripples/deads every battlehex). Don't try to fight one big battle hex every turn as you will only get to fight one round, but 3 - 5 20 ship hexes can usually enable you to fight 2 or 3 rounds before you retreat. Just remember, any of those 3 - 5 battle hexes that he defends with overwhelming odds you just retreat from after one battle round. You WILL lose cruisers often, but as a Hydran you should be used to that =)

Another way is to use the Orion Pirate rules. In our last campaign, the Hydrans leased 39 ship equivalents of Orions and used them to totally trash the BATS and SB's on BOTH! the Lyran and Klingon borders....
If the Coalition is smart, they have their D6Vs and FVs and other crap carriers
down their to soak-off as much of that damage each turn as they can.

Christopher, if they do that on a regular basis their compot is low, put up an all-
cruiser line once in a while and punish them for this (they can only have 18
fighters on the line and with D6V and F5V that equates to a LOT of carriers (4+
carrier groups) so with a lot of damage you can either let it fall or direct on HIS
carrier groups (remember to bring along a fast ship to make the pursuit more
fun, lots of crippled carriers and escorts mean only 3 'good' ships in the pursued
force, or he self kills his carriers and escorts, either way it's good for you)

David, not really.

If the Hydrans out up a crusier line, then they lose at least a crusier.

All the Coalition need do is keep old carrier groups(at least 2xD6Vs with good
escorts), a few stasis ships and maulers, and the rest can be F5s and older.
Anytime the Hydrans make a go of it, the D6Vs stasis/mauler combo pop up.
Rinse, repeat. There is just no way for the Hydrans to be a serious threat unless
the Coalition allows them to be.

if the coalition is putting stasis ships on the line regularly kill them, they are
worth directing on (remember their production rate is only 1/year)

the mauler is more of a threat, but they can't be everywhere.

2xD6V with good escorts (I will assume 2 each) will eat up 6 command slots,
have fairly low density, and still only provide 10 fighters. in this case there is no
reason to direct or even to put up the all-cruiser line, just use your carrier line
and outlast the coalition fighters, you throw away 10 damage/round, the coalition
will throw away a lot more damage shooting at your fighters or directing on your
escorts

to get 18 fighters with the old carriers the coalition would have to field 2xD6V and
2xF5V which will be 10 ships, not leaving much room for specialty ships.

a D6V+AD5+F5E=6(5)+6+4=21 for 3 ships average 7 COMPOT, not shabby.

It's still allows:
C8+2*3D6V+BG(3CW+3DW)
12+42+22+18=94 COMPOT
Or w/ Mauler+Statis, remove a 3D6V, send 6ftrs forward, and add a MD5+D7A/D5A

Scott, I wouldn't worry about 5 fighters in the fleet. that wouldn't be nearly enough to trigger the all-cruiser line I was talking about, yes it will allow the coalition to ignore 5 damage/round, but as a hyran I should be doing a LOT better then that.

I would say that making harassing attacks is crazy as the Hydrans. Every extra battle hex allows him to kill another cruiser with fighters. You will be losing 1 and a third to one and two-thirds equivalents in each hex. Those 5 dead ships are likley the majority of your production for that turn.

As a coalition player I would be giddy at that prospect. In exchange for 15-20 econ in repair (assuming at least 12 coalition fighters per battlehex) I have negated an entire turn of Hyran production!

If you direct on him in return you are still going to be losing 5 ships plus a couple equivalents in fighters to his mere 5 ship hulls. Thats minus 2 SE per turn. Unless he does not direct, I don't see the gain from lashing out and trashing your own fleet each turn. Conserve your numbers and build SE.

if you have enough carriers to have 12 fighters in each of 5 different hexes this is drawing a LOT of carriers away from the fed front.

if the hydrans are doing 20 EP worth of damage in a turn it will take a couple turns to get those ships back to the front (that's 6 BATS and a SB worth of repairs) a turn or two of this sort of exchange will give the hydrans shipcount superiority so they can then get through the coalition pinning forces and kill more of the bases (with a convoy for support to get the range) and with a larger buffer zone the hydrans really don't have to worry about their capitol and can use their entire fleet in offensive operations

Keep in mind, in this game, the Klingons crossed the Fed border with 200 ships on turn 7. Any strategy that takes more than 2-3 turns to start bearing big fruit will probably be too little, too late...

John,
How did the Fed SBs fair? Did all 3 of them fall?

Tony, thanks for paying attention. I temporarily saved the unimportant 7th SB
whatever good it does me. I really did get my ass kicked over the other 2xSBs. I faced a \(-2\) EW shift after the first round and overall averaged about the same if not less damage than the Coalition in each hex. Both my fleets are wrecked and the 3rd Fleet is unsupplied. The Feds will have \(\sim130\)EP for T7.

I don’t want to open up this debate again or get off my Hydran topic but T7 really shouldn’t be \textit{that} devastating.

By John Colacito (Sandro) on Tuesday, October 07, 2003 - 01:26 am: Edit

Back to the Hydran Dilemma: fighting multiple hexes sounds like a bad idea. I have to agree with Chris & Mark’s assessments: Coalition fighters will mitigate my damage and more of my ships will get directed on. I also don’t see how more than 3 hexes are possible given my limited \# of CR10 ships, carriers, cruisers and scouts.

You guys also skip another obvious point: unlike FRD parks the Coalition does not have to pin me out of 1214. He could simply allow pieces of my fleet to enter the hex and then pin the rest outside. Even if half my fleet gets into the hex I still won’t bag the SB, in fact I’ll get creamed over the base. The Hydrans can’t take out SBs like the Coalition can as I don’t have the odds in my favor, I can’t afford the repairs, and I can’t replace the losses. So even if a multiple hex strategy is beneficial why would the Coalition acquiesce?

By John Colacito (Sandro) on Tuesday, October 07, 2003 - 01:27 am: Edit

Nevermind.

By John Colacito (Sandro) on Tuesday, October 07, 2003 - 01:28 am: Edit

Whoops again.

By John Colacito (Sandro) on Tuesday, October 07, 2003 - 01:30 am: Edit

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By John Colacito (Sandro) on Tuesday, October 07, 2003 - 01:30 am: Edit

Doh! Multiple posts, this is embarassing, I really should go to bed now.

By Jimi LaForm (Laform) on Tuesday, October 07, 2003 - 11:08 am: Edit

It appears that you have two choices as the Alliance at this point John.
1: Concede. (why concede though, play it out and see where it goes).
2: Fight. The only way you are going to relieve pressure off of the Feds is by hitting Klingon (forget and ignore the Lyrans unless you drive straight at the Lyran HW and destroy the shipyard). The Klingons are 70\% of the early Coalition, hurting their economy by overwhelming their repair facilities (and destroying less then defended BATS is an easy way to hurt their repair facility) and crippling their fleet. You have to attack to divert forces from the Feds. In my opinion you have to make a choice. If that choice demands sacrificing Hydran cruisers to try to save
the Fed HW, then you have to make that choice. If the Fed HW falls, what hope does the Alliance have?

By Edward Reece (Edfactor) on Tuesday, October 07, 2003 - 11:47 am: Edit

Just because the Fed homeworld falls doesn't mean you lose. IF you can make the coalition pay a dear price for the hex and the 3 surrounding starbases.

now as to strategy advice.

#1 make 2 strong reserves at the capital

#2 put a task force of about 20 ships at 1217, that threatens a starbase, a major planet and a minor planet.

#3 put a token garrison of a CC and 6 FF on your starbase

#4 move about 60 ships or more to 0514 and an FRD with at least 6 ships covering it to 0515. This threatens several major planets and the Lyran capital. A tug can become a supply point (its within 6 of the off map area) and the FRD can move forward 1 hex so you can take the Lyran capital if he underdefends it and retrograde out to safety.

Thats 115 total ships so I am not sure if you have that many or more.

By Tony Barnes (Tonyb) on Tuesday, October 07, 2003 - 11:51 am: Edit

Ok, what about Entire (or nearly entire) Hydran fleet to 916. Assuming the Coalition is mostly in 1214 or 1115 (reacted out), they can't get by you to your capital. You react out & pin away from 916. Make sure to keep a tug in 916. Move an FRD up to 916.

Next turn, designate a supply tug. You'll be able to hit major 810 & 1112, minor 1010 (and minors 1210, 1312 if you don't mind activating the IWR), and BATS 1011, 1417, 1419 (with no reaction from 1214). If the Coalition spreads out too much to defend all those targets, you may be able to get into 1214 with enough forces to kill it. Another thing, if you've been building up fast ships (or even just with 2xLGE + some THR's), you can hit an extra 3 BATS.

All of this may not have a huge immediate impact. In fact, killing the BATS is mostly irrelevant. You'd need to maintain pressure for multiple turns to make the Coalition miss those BATS for repair. However, capturing 2 majors & 2 minors (even for just 1 turn) will take 48 EPs out of the Coalition coffers over the next 2 years.

By Christopher E. Fant (Cfant) on Tuesday, October 07, 2003 - 03:53 pm: Edit

I beg to differ however. If you do lose the Fed Homeworld, you do lose. The game
Wrong Chris,

Its all about the cost you make them pay. Lets look at an obviously extreme case, the Fed homeworld falls and 300 coalition ships die, yes the game is over, the coalition has no hope at that point. In my current game the Fed capital fell and the coalition lost 160 ships, now the Fed capital is trading hands every turn and will continue to do so until the alliance is able to hold it permanently and push the coalition out of Fed territory. Counting the 3 starbases that fell afterwards we lost about 175 ships, and thats about the price you need the coalition to pay.

Now advice for the Feds:
I would recomend not setting up your MB's over the Fed homeworld the klingons will probably be able to get into the capital so they would be toast at very little cost and would reduce your compot considerably. I would recomend these hexes as fallback positions 3008, 3306, 3509, of course if you can keep the Klingons out on turn 8 then go ahead and set the 3 MB's up over the earth.

Get Kzinti help immediately, remember they can send 12 ships in an expeditionary force. BTW what does the Kzint look like, you said the capital fell but have you taken it back yet? Have they been driven out of the Marquise provinces?

Kzinti? I kept the Marquis SB at least for one more only due to a major flub/error on their part. The Kzinti have problems of their own and I seriously doubt they can help the Feds. Kzintai has seen 5 Coalition PDUs and one MB placed there in the last 2 turns. I can’t say how things will turn out next turn until I see their retro but I don’t think retaking the capital is feasible at this point.

As far as the Feds go think it may be premature to write them off at this point. I really must see if the Coalition retros at all before I draw any conclusions. They do have a lot to defend in Kzinti space. Maybe I should've posted this game?

Thanks for all the advice fellas. I'm really getting some good ideas even though I'm sure my shifty opponents are following this discussion as well.

- Hydran move vs the Klingons: Let's say that I start with an initial move to 0916 or 1217. This might not yield the anticipated results because they can place several reserves on 1214 using ships already there and thus cover most of the targets that I could reach anyway.

- Hydran move vs the Lyrans: Abandoning Hydrax in order to go after Lyratan sounds a bit crazy. With new production, repairs and strat they can easily get
some 80 ships there. Losing Hydrax and ruining my fleet in order to alleviate the burden on the Feds for a mere turn or two does not sound like an equitable trade.

On the other hand a *lesser* move towards the Lyrans might not be so bad. Moving ~20 or so hulls towards the Lyran border entails a negligible risk. I could still be within range of 1214, Hyoran reserves can arrive to assist a Coalition mugging, and after retreat I'd still be within range of some nice Lyran stuff. A fleet deeper in Lyran space can at the very least cover my raiders and deprive the Lyrans of 6-10EP each turn.

Yes I should focus on the Klingons but I believe that messing with the Lyrans can at least indirectly help the rest of the Alliance. Messing with the Lyrans at least forces them to take ships and reserves from *elsewhere* in order to cover their defenses.

By Christopher E. Fant (Cfant) on Tuesday, October 07, 2003 - 08:00 pm: Edit

No, you are wrong Ed, but we will agree to disagree.

By David Lang (Dlang) on Tuesday, October 07, 2003 - 08:21 pm: Edit

and as you advance the coalition only has so many reserves available, that means that you should hit several targets, if they move all their reserve counters to this area to deal with you that means no reserves on the fed front, if they don't you retreat after one round (only exposing small stuff) where the reserves appear and where they don't you sack the target.

By David Lang (Dlang) on Tuesday, October 07, 2003 - 08:24 pm: Edit

oh and as for your opponent reading this as well.

if the key to your strategy is 'my opponen't won't notice this' use a different strategy.

find a strategy that assumes that your opponent knows your plans and make it so that no matter what he does you can react accordingly and still gain from it (even if the gain is just tieing down more ships), if your opponent happens to mis one of these possibilities and leaves themselves wide open definantly take advantage of it 😆😊, but assume that he won't and plan accordingly.

By Tony Barnes (Tonyb) on Tuesday, October 07, 2003 - 08:50 pm: Edit

John,

If you move to 916, you FORCE the Coalition to accept several losses (planets/BATS) or to use more reserves than they want to commit to the Hydrans (and even then, you can hit more targets than the Coalition can reserve to defend). From here, nothing can get by you without pinning your entire force (so 617/718 are fairly safe).
1217 is a bad idea (IMHO) as it allows the Coalition to get around the Hyran fleet & hit the un(der)-defended capital.

Moving a small force into Lyran space (say 513) does threaten a bunch of Lyran targets, but if you move more than 20-30 ships, you're opening up the capital to devestation (not the homeworld, but certainly the outlying systems). Less than 30 and you can't really do too much (2 reserves on 709 could react out / reserve to defend any empty targets).

Would anyone like to volunteer some economic strategy for a severely beleaguered Fed turn 7-9? I’m expecting between 130-140-EP turn 7 and around 165-175EP turns 8-9. Here are some more specific questions:

- I’ve seen people advocate CA>CC conversions, I’m really undecided on this one, is it worth it?
- I hate fast ships but maybe someone can convince me to convert CFs? I really need my few CAs on the line. Should we vote for the preferred conversion: CC vs. CF?
- How many/what kind of escorts? Of course the DE is nice but the ECL and FFE are more efficient to repair.
- Do I build the extra CVS each turn 7 & 9?
- Should I build those expensive CVA pods? All 3? Another vote: two extra CVSs or a CVA pod instead?
- I’d like to send some EP to the Kzinti especially since their shipyard returns T10, but EP are scare and desperately needed for field/CEDS repair
- Let’s ignore the base upgrades and PDUs for now.

John, my take on stuff.....

*CA->CC conversions. These you do if you build what you want and have a few EPs left over. The CVS should be the primary conversion, then CCs.

*CFs->You could do these on the 5th and 6th Starbases if you want, but the CC should be done before this as these will be the main line of defense after your few fighters are gone.

*BUILD/CONVERT ALL THE DEs you can find/borrow/steal.

*BUILD THE CVS!!!!!

*Build at least one CVA pod, but the CVS should be your priority.

*EPs for the Kzinti only AFTER you build all the CVA
pods/carriers/escorts/CCs/CFs for the Feds. The Feds are the primary mover, they must get as much online as possible. The Kzin are a secondary player now more than ever. Concentrate on the defense of the Federation.

*Ignore if you wish, but MBs and a few more PDUs on the Capital are a good idea.

Economic suggestion for Federation turn 7---135 EP(7 Free Fighters)

1xDN = 16
1xTG = 6
3xNCL = 15
3xFF = 9
4xPDUs = 28
Total = 74

Activate CA,DD,3xCL,3xFF. = 8
Total = 82.

Your conversions will depend on how many repairs you have to do, and those repairs could be done with the money spent on the PDUs instead. That leaves about 40 or so EP for conversions, which I would suggest the following:

1xCVS (capital) = 2+(6)
1xCVS (3rd Starbase) = 2+(1)+10
Total = 14

That leaves you about 26 or so, make at least DEs to go along with your CVSs and then at least 2 more to along with any BTVs you are setting up. Then go for the CCs or the CLVs from mothballs.

By Jeff Wile (Jswile) on Sunday, October 12, 2003 - 11:12 pm: Edit

John-

I can't contradict Chris' points, but I would make the observation that a lot depends on the tactical situation and the strategic threat.

Chris has given you a fairly well balanced production schedule, not weighted in favor of ships or static defenses (the PDU's/MB's or base upgrades.)

The problem with such a "generic" approach is that the exact situation "on the front" will determine how effective your defense will be.

If the Coalition has taken large losses on the Kzinti and Hydran fronts, your defense will be somewhat easier, and perhaps you can afford to put more money
into ships and "offensive units" (defined as those things most helpful in an offensive).

If the Hydran and Kzinti's failed to inflict normal casualties on the Coalition, you might be better off with a more defensive strategy.

Either way, Chris has provided a reasonable list.

In a sense your situation is like the man who wants to make a rabbit stew...the first ingredient is to catch the rabbit!

FWIW, my 'votes' on the subjects are:

1. if you have the money available after the priority items are taken care of, then yes, upgrade the CA to CC.
2. on the CA vs CF, the fast cruisers are a nice thing to have when you have a use for them...the extra hex of strategic movement is a nice feature...but not in a siege where every addition point of COMPOT may count. get the CF's when you have a use for them, but for the combat line you would be better off with the CA/CC. I would vote no unless there was a specific task that you intend the CF to accomplish. it's too expensive for just a toy.
3. The DE's are nice, and very effective in the escort role. If your into attrition warfare and have a shortage of hulls, it might be more effective to also add some FFE and ECL's (especially the ones from the mothball fleet) to compliment the DE's. if they survive you can always convert them to some other variant but you want to avoid having carriers short of escorts...I would prefer a DE to a FFE...but if the choice is FFE or nothing, I'll take the FFE!
4. BUILD THE CVS! the Cost effectiveness of the fighters is absolutely necessary in attrition warfare.
5. On the CVS/CVA pod question, it depends, the extra fighters the CVA pod represents will allow you to keep the better carriers in one more round of combat (perhaps more!) you have to balance it against the numbers of other hulls in service and the strategic situation. At least one would be good.
6. In this instance I can't add anything to Chris' point, maximize Fed production before you start to look for otherways to spend the EP's.
7. MB's are a good investment and one of the few static defenses that are truly portable. building a supply and placing them in the capital might be a good thing to have.

Good luck!

By Tony Barnes (Tonyb) on Monday, October 13, 2003 - 01:27 am: Edit

One big point in favor of the CFs (I think I'd choose CCs over CFs though), having a fast reserve is more useful for the Feds than for any other race. Their territory is so spread out (and the SBs are 7 hexes apart), so that extra hex is more valuable (IMHO) for the Feds than for anyone else.
Of course, with the 3rd & 4th SBs already gone, and the 7th cut off by neutral Orion, the fast reserve doesn't buy you quite as much...

By James Southcott (Yakface) on Monday, October 13, 2003 - 04:46 am: Edit

Think Jeff and Chris have about covered it.

I would look to convert more ECL's than DE's. If cash is going to tight ECL's are very good at taking damage economically (as others have noted) and the drop in compot is insignificant. Also it has been suggested that they can be used as the outer escort when teamed up with a DE. If your opponent is going to direct, an ECL is a better target from your point of view, than DE's.

By David Slatter (Davidas) on Monday, October 13, 2003 - 04:57 am: Edit

I'll second James' comment on ECLs. The standard Fed group should be carrier-DE-ECL. Another bonus the ECL gives is that it's harder for the coalition to maul the whole group in one go, and you don't lose any compot compared to the FFE you would have there otherwise (DEs are way too valuable as an outer escort, at least until you have the NAC - there is a massive shortage of fed DDs very quickly).

By Edward Reece (Edfactor) on Monday, October 13, 2003 - 09:28 am: Edit

Don't build CVA pods, build your CVA's and try to build 1 or 2 CVS groups a year. Build FCR's, I hate alliance FCR's in my game.

Build all of the PDU's you can under those 3 starbases in the Fed capital.

USE field repairs!!! I cannot emphasize this enough, you need to fight twice a turn and your going to need all of your ships healthy on his turn. Its more efficient then overbuilding.

Please also note that you may move the Romulan boarder fleet now, but only within its setup area. Move the whole thing to 3509, you can make 1 reserve with the RESV marker and you can put one of your other RESV markers there as soon as he can get to the Fed capital. Remember the fleet will be released as soon as he moves within 3 hexes of the Fed capital.

By John Colacito (Sandro) on Monday, October 13, 2003 - 02:02 pm: Edit

So, if I have to choose then I'm better off building extra CVSs instead of the CVA pod? I'm not so sure, I kind of like using the CVA-TG in combat.

Of course I'll make my FCR each turn as the Feds are the only Alliance guys to get any use out of new FCRs...what a sh*t rule.

Are you guys sure that you can use the ECL as the outer escort? Isn't it considered a heavy escort and doesn't the light-escort have to be outermost? I vaguely recall some discussion or ruling on this in the past, anyone remember?
I think you can only move 6 ships at a time from an unreleased 6th Fleet.

One last thing: does the COV>CVL conversion count as one of my 2 allowable carrier builds that turn?

By James Southcott (Yakface) on Monday, October 13, 2003 - 02:22 pm: Edit

The ways the rule is written it should be allowed (just says arranged according to defence factor), however might be worth clearing with Nick first (could be a grey area around whether this includes the crippled defence factor).

By Edward Reece (Edfactor) on Monday, October 13, 2003 - 04:39 pm: Edit

John the Romulan boarder fleet isn't released but the scenario rules specifically state that it can maneuver within its deployment area. Thats just like the home fleet maneuvering within Fed space.

FCR's, in my game the alliance has slightly more then the coalition, and FCR's have saved 5 or 6 alliance carrier groups (2 of them were Hydran!) and have not saved a single coalition carrier group. I hate the danged things, but I am coalition right now and I feel they are pro alliance.

By Christopher E. Fant (Cfant) on Monday, October 13, 2003 - 05:06 pm: Edit

Ya know, it makes NO sense that a Size Class 3 escort is smaller than a Size Class 4 escort. Just so you can look, it does list the ECL as a Heavy Escort and the DE as a Light Escort. I do believe that prevents the ECL from being on the outside.

By John Colacito (Sandro) on Monday, October 13, 2003 - 05:10 pm: Edit

Chris, at first I'd agree with you, it doesn't make sense to allow a "heavy" ECL to be an outside escort but a strict reading of (515.31) would seem to allow this.

Ed, nice catch on the 6th Fleet, I never knew that, good stuff man! Thanks.

FCRs: in my games I watch the Klingons build an extra 12 fighters a year with this rule - not cool. When the Roms and Lyrans get going it can be upwards of 30 per year! My group thinks that FCRs should've been limited like all other Aux-ships. Ach, whatever, this is an old debate anyway, there seems to be little point in rehashing it.

By Christopher E. Fant (Cfant) on Monday, October 13, 2003 - 06:02 pm: Edit

John, a very strict reading of the rule might give you that, but the annex listed specifically lists the ECL as heavy and the DE as light.....that is twisting the spirit of the rule by abusing the letter of the rule.

By Mark Sayther (Msayther) on Monday, October 13, 2003 - 09:09 pm: Edit

John,
Lots of good advice in there, but I do think you should consider those CF's. You should certainly convert to the CVS's as a priority but you can sub to a CF for 2 more than the price of the CA, as opposed to a conversion for 3EP. And the CF's have the decidedly nifty advantage of counting as 2 ships for pinning purposes. Depending upon your situation you should at least consider them (I generally build my 1 allowed per turn as a rule.)

That said, I would not disparage the CA/CC conversion if you can afford it (maybe not this game.) It does more damage, takes more damage, commands in a pinch better, and costs the same to repair.

Also, as opposed to field repair I like to maximize carrier groups to take advantage of CEDS repair at normal rate and then spend the money you save on the nasty field repair rate on overproduction (when you can afford it) The Feds can crank out carrier groups T7. Convert a mess of escorts and assign escorts to your CVL's, TG-CV's, 2x activated CLV's, and the 2 CVS's that you can build T7.

If I can afford it in a game, I like to assemble 10 CV groups T7 and then build the 3 CVA pods T8 as well as my CVA. Of course, that's pretty ideal production and won't happen much, but everyone has a dream.

John

The Hydran fleet is an offensive weapon. If the Coalition is not attacking it, it should be attacking the Coalition!!!! Remember w/admiral the Hydran open space line is well excess of 100 pts. You can afford to lose a cheap cruiser for a stasis/mauler. Always remember no stasis ship survives its first round of combat it uses its stasis ability(targets that juicy and CHEAP are hard to find. You can afford to lose a cruiser to a mauler. Every mauler you kill is not in fed territory where it belongs!!

Just my thoughts on what to do w/the Hydtans.

Eric (writing for chuck)

I agree with Chass,

The Hydran fleet is an offensive weapon. Every Mauler in Hydran Space is not at the Fed Capital. Every SFG in Hydran Space is not at the Fed Capital. Any Reserve Marker defending the Hydran boarder is not defending the Fed boarder. The Hydrans need to move towards the Klingon boarder then hit as many sites as they reasonably can. Everything he diverts to stop a Hydran advance is not in Fed space. Make him regret not taking Hydran space first by forcing him to defend
against you.

Move towards the Klingon SB in mass. If he steps out to pin you, stop there, fight and force him to retreat. If he doesn't retreat right away keep fighting. He will have a hard time repairing everything right there at that SB if he fights multiple rounds. If he directs, he'll do considerably less damage unless he brings maulers. Kill them. Make him pay for not sending them against the Feds. When he retreats, you stay there. He can’t reach your capital while you’re in the way so threaten his defenses. The threat itself may make him move more ships to the Hydran boarder. Some players say that this will be bad for the Hydrans, but the correct question is, will it be bad for the Alliance? If it gives the Feds time to defend the capital, it’s good.

I will assume that because he did not push to take the Hydran capital, you have well over 100se (closer to 150se). For the Hydrans, that’s a lot of fighters. Use them to punish him for leaving you with all those ships. Once you push him back to his last remaining base within 6 of the Hydran capital, kill it. If you’ve got 150se, you can do it easily. His need to defend it will divert attention away from the Feds. That’s the whole point, isn’t it? You’ll take a lot of damage (and lose some ships), but he’ll lose his last major repair center within 6 of your capital. He’ll have a hard time threatening Hydrax and you’ll be free to start harassing the Klingon interior. If that doesn’t divert ships from the Fed boarder, nothing short of an attack at the Klingon capital will.

By the way, with your fleet that far forward, if you kill his SB on your boarder, you’re in range to raid his capital. That WILL get his attention and should pull some pressure off the Feds. That’s what you want, and he won’t have any bases/supply points within 6 hexes of your capital, so you have some time and he won’t. Because if he turns full force to hit the Hydrans then you just saved the Fed capital, and that’s what you’re trying to do.

It’s all about pressure. Yes, you’re risking the Hydran fleet and home world, but if you stay at home to defend it, then the Klingons can safely ignore the Hydrans and hit the Fed capital hard. He can only do that if the Hydrans let him.
Hi Dale

Just on the point of getting the 30EP - in order to get it you need have no bases left and get everything off-map. Which means that you will never get your capital back because there will realistically be nothing that you can do to stop the coaltion setting up two SB in the hex. An alternative is to keep the Hydran fleet active (uncrippled), retreat after losing all your fighters and fixed defences at the capital and operate from one of the planets - 416 is my favourite.

Each turn, make sure you have a supply line to the Old colonies and you will get replacement fighters. Once the planet is a supply source you will always be in supply there (even if cut-off, although you do not get your fighters back unless you have that supply line to the OC). From here you can threaten any bases the coaltion try to set-up/upgrade. Although he can pin you in 517 there are then four possibilities:

1) If he fights and retreats after 1 round, the next turn you will get into the capital to kill the bases (remember if you are not on the planet you need to ensure a supply line to the OC at the end of your turn and re-establish it before going in to the capital on the next turn).

2) Assuming fairly even SE counts, if he stays and fights you will get to trade fighters for cripples and eventually get to any base or

3) If he directs you win the hex and get the bases next turn.

4) He leaves so many ships in the area so that he can direct quite a bit and still win the hex. Then the Kzinti & Feds get to have fun and the Hydrans have done their job: tieing up ships.

You will notice that from 416 you can hit the EB SB at 0411. You are forcing the coaltion to defend two targets and tie up even more ships. Retiring off-map allows the coaltion to pin you at the edge of the map with equal numbers of ships, rather than having to keep about one and a half as many in the Hydran theatre, as you have.

The 30EP is nice but less important than disrupting coaltion plans. You can also get it later, at any point when you have no ships on the board.

IIRC the Cold War has the same OOB as the General War. Only difference is Hydrans attacked T1 instead of the Kzinti. I don't envy you as the Alliance playing this scenario. This one is the coaltion dream - Hydrax first, and time to then prepare for a T7 invasion of the Feds. Makes it even more important fot the
Hydrans to tie up lots of Coalition forces down-under.

As for your question....Others will disagree, but carriers are a must for the Hydrans. However I wouldn't touch the UH (unless you can't do anything else with yur free fighters) - convert the LN's to DE's and as many others as you can produce. Use at least one LAV as a heavy carrier (put the other on the line at the capital). Remember if you are going to retreat you must destroy the LAV first otherwise all their escorts will die with them as they will have nowhere to retro to. Convert an RN to CV as soon as you can and use 2TG as CVT's.

James, Dale is saying that the Old Colonies have a nest egg (EPs saved) of 30. Not from losing the Capital, they just have nothing to do with them.

Not the "Hydran Guilds" money that comes when the capital falls.

Ah - whoops - In that case just the last para

Dale,

More carriers gives you more fighters gives you more pin value so you definatly want more carriers, but the UH may not be the best choise. Are you getting short on DEs? If so, they are probably a better choice for DD conversions. You definatly want to maximize fighters though, so look for any other carrier or fussion armed ship conversions you can make. Both in the capital and the Old Colonies.

And subbing a THR is always a good idea for the Hydrans, if you have your tugs and adequate RN/DG numbers.

The UH at least is a medium carrier, so it can be produced in the Old Colonies, unlike the CV which has to be produced at the capital shipyard.

Thanks for the ideas guys. I hadn't even thought about using my LAVs as an escorted unit. I definitely do need to get some DEs so I can get use out of true carrier fighters (LAVs, TVs). So far, I've been forced to go the CAs + BG route. A big problem for me is that my opponent has set himself up to pull either a conquer or a starve strategy. This puts (psychological) pressure on me to get the most out of my EPs (and FFF) as soon as possible. I mean, I have even considered using my 8.5 FFF at the capital to form a UH and convert another one (+DE) at the Old Colonies for the full (2+14 + 1+1) cost. Of course, then I have to live with the reputation of the man who built two UHs. The CV comes much too
late for my tastes (and situation), though I will convert/build one the first opportunity I can get. This coming turn (T3A) I'm going to have maybe 30ish EP at each the Old Colonies and Capital. I'm thinking about TG, TR, and 2LN+2HN-4UH at the Capital. I guess 14ish would leave me with enough for another couple of DEs (built), though I would have to check my schedule. No additional defenses around Hydrax would leave it at SB+MB+13PDU+3PGB. I built the PGBs for possible upgrade material (I noticed the production cost + upgrade cost = PDU cost) and help in the EW war (I keep EW longer at the Capital). With the 1st and 2nd Fleet SBs falling T3C, I figure I'll keep maybe 2/3 of my fleet over Hydrax and 1/3 over the Expeditionary SB. The life of the Hydran is not an easy one.

I hate the UH...

Take CEDS damage on your CVT groups and go repair them off-map. Convert something (THR) at your OC SB, and build an AH there as well.

You can always get a TG off-map, load up the EP and simply walk them back to your capital during the next op-move.

A wise man once told me to string a few FFs between the capital and the off-map to make cutting the connection more difficult. If you keep a reserve fleet handy then he'll have to cut the connection with more than just a few FF/E4s making life more annoying for him.

I second the hate for the UH, however....

For some reason I find that when I don't build the wretched thing, I wind up regretting it later in the game. Like right after the Hydran capital falls, only having 2 CVT groups (assuming the LAVs died glorious deaths) just doesn't cut it. That one extra UH group can make a big difference. Now playing without stasis, then I'd go cruiser line the whole way and probably never build a CV, until CVAs come about for them.

Not sure if this is the right place for this, but...

my most recent game has proven to me that I don't yet have a good enough sense of the force you need to bring to battles at fixed defenses in order to guarantee victory. I usually bring too much or (most often and most painfully) too little.

In chess, you often learn by looking at predesigned positions and assessing them. I was wondering if that approach would be useful in F+E.
Maybe an interesting feature in captain's log would be sample battle forces for people to fight out solo. You might have something like:

Klingon: 2 C8, D7C, 4 D7, D5V, 3 D5, AD5, 2 F5L, 4 F5, F5E, D5S, D6M, 3 D6D

Federation: CVA, 2 CA, 3 NCL, 2 DE, ECL, 3 FF, SC, FFS, Starbase

With a note such as "The Klingons should be able to win this battle. Fight it once without directing damage, and then evaluate the effect of directing on the SC or carrier escorts. For the Federation, evaluate the effects of directing on the scout or mauler."

You could have capital assaults, planets, bases, or even open space battles. Would other people find this useful?

In my opinion not really as battle hexes are quite often determined not just by 'do I have enough ships to win' but also by the strategic importance of that hex.

What I mean by strategic importance is..
1: how many casualties can I afford to take to win this hex.
AND
2: what the map looks like at this point
AND
3: any other intangibles in place in this one particular game

There are so many intangibles that makes this question nearly impossible to answer. Whichever side wants to win this hex more then the other can/will win (dice willing of course).

Indeed. There are so many "What Ifs" that it would take a book to cover half of them, and then there are all the things that no one has thought up yet, or recently

Gentlemen,

your point is a good one. But to answer those questions, you need to know what level of casualties you're going to take--to say "Oh, I'm going to take this level of casualties here. Do I want to do that?" I think advanced players have developed a sense of what to expect. This might be a way for beginning and intermediate players to develop that sense.

I guess if you gave a general answer that the defender is willing to take 20% ship
losses (cripples not kills) then you can come up with a chart that shows what the Coalition has to bring in to take this point with various amounts of losses... i.e. minimum ships needed or maximum ships needed to crush this hex easily etc. For a beginner might be an interesting thing to come up with but I can foresee a ton of work involved in such an endeavor.

On a side target, how many out there think it is a good idea for the Lyrans not to attack the Kzinti on Turn 1? How many think it's a terrible idea? Personally I think they should attack turn 1, and at least get a BATS or two out of the way for the Turn 2 blitz, but on the counterpoint they can save themselves the repair bill and perhaps take less casualties later. Thoughts?

I strongly feel that the Lyrans should attack the Kzin on turn 1. I feel they can get 2 bats. The Lyrans should not fight any fight at a bats tht is defended by a Kzin fleet(a few ships sure, but not a fleet). The Lyrans do not want to overload repair capacities. My goal for the Lyrans on turn 1 is to soften up for a turn 2 absolute assault. My goal on turn 2 is everything within range of the Northeastern Lyran Bats(next to the Wyn cluster). This includes sending most of the ships needed to pin the Duke's SB. By dropping 2 bats on turn 1 the Lyrans can send 10 more ships (5 for each bats) further into Kzin space, and take more pressure off of the Klingons who can hit the best targets of opportunity(the capital perhaps).

I feel that the Lyrans should NOT attack on T1. In fact, a powerful move (in my opinion) is to move the Home and Red Claw forward to 0704. If he wants to react out fighters forward to the neutral zone then you will get a small fight at best (supported by one 11 ship reserve which you can easily crush). This puts the entire Northern Lyran navy in range of 0902 and 1304. This makes the Kzinti think long and hard on what/how to defend. Also you are not exchanging Lyran frigate/destroyers for fighters/escorts on T1. The downfall of this is that the Kzinti have 0 repairs and no loss of income on T1, but that quickly changes. Devestating in my eyes (I've both seen it used against me and used it against my opponents with terrible devestation on the Kzinti).

Doing this method you get all the outer bats, and at minimum one of the SB's, possibly both SB's for cheap on T2.

I feel that the Lyrans should attack on Turn 1 just to see what the Kzinti are willing to place in his way. The key being, if the Lyrans can take out the BATS in one round, it then becomes an open space battle (and the Lyrans do hold a 10-15 SE advantage over the Kzinti).

A bold Lyran that stays in Kzinti territory treatens a Turn 2 raid into Kzintai or even worse, allows the Klingon to tighten his drive to Kzintai by taking some of
the usually secondary Klingon targets (depending on the Marquis setup).

By **David Slatter (Davidas)** on Wednesday, October 22, 2003 - 04:42 am: Edit

The Lyrans must attack turn 1. You cannot waste tempo, and you have money to throw away on repairs. If nothing else, use the opportunity to Dirdam a few Zin ships. Killing bases is of course preferred.

Just don't take more than about 15-20 cripples (unless you bag the SB), and make sure the Zin do not get any cheap persuits.

By **John Doucette (Jkd)** on Wednesday, October 22, 2003 - 06:11 am: Edit

The Lyrans most defenitely should attack on Turn 1, if for no other reason than to build and hold momentum. Momentum can allow wonderfully bizzare things to occur. History is replete with examples of victories, either in battles, or in entire campaigns, that should not, on paper, have happened, and the same thing can be done in F&E as well. Remember, we're playing human opponents and war is as much psychological as it is physical.

As an example of just how critical momentum is, in my current game (using the 93 rules, CVW, and SO while we absorb F&E2K), Turn 6 is about to start and not only have neither active Alliance capitals been attacked, the Coallition offensive has stalled on the Kzin front and the Hydrans have just smashed Enemy Blood's SB and cut off what's left of Enemy Blood just over the border in Hyd space. Mostly due to the fact that I surprised the Coallition and sacrificed half the Kzin navy defending the Count's Fleet SB (and smashing the Lyran navy in the north with it) and then followed that up with a Hydran offensive at both the Klingons and Lyrans, thus taking the momentum of the Coallition offensive away and shifting it to myself.

The casualties the Hyd have taken mean that momentum will soon be shifting back, but, still, now there's a very good chance that it'll be the Fed's attacking the Klingons instead of vice versa.

By **Tony Barnes (Tonyb)** on Wednesday, October 22, 2003 - 12:29 pm: Edit

With FE2k & all the expansions, the use of attacking with the Lyrans is greatly diminished. The sides are too close to even (and the Kzinti have defenses hard points to further even the odds).

However, I think the Lyrans should attack on turn 1 and try for one of the following:
- force the Kzinti into some error. Sure, you should never count on the enemy making an error, but you should also make sure to give them every possible chance to surprise you
- pick off any cheap bases
- kill either 703 or 803. Taking down 2 adjacent hard points on 1 turn is hard (defenders can retreat from 1 to the other). However, if you shoot 1 on Turn 1, the 2nd becomes much easier on turn 2.