I wanted to ask this question here because this is a strategy question I'm considering (and we'll see if my opponent reads this and plans against it). Has anyone gone the DD for BD route playing the Gorn? I am currently on T10 and I'm considering just how I want to use the Gorn. Since they don't have the traditional attrition unit, I'm thinking about the beauty of the 5pt FF. This is especially important in the relevance of the Gorn logistics' as well as the Combat base repair at standard cost for the Gorn' ability. During the Gorn-Federation War scenario I used F-FFs as my attrition units because there were no fighters. This seems to be essentially true for the Gorn on T10. This strategy failed to some extent in the F-G War because of the need for pinning hulls, but this does not affect the GW Gorn to a great degree. In the F-G War the crippled FFs were out of action for the enemy OpMove and thus failed to support the other major use of FFs (pin hulls). In the General War, the Gorn start off able to immediately repair 12xDD per turn via their two REP SHIPS and their LTT+REP POD. Thus, these 12xDD could still function as pin hulls. With three additional REP PODs, this would rise to a maximum 24xDD per turn, taking 120 damage for 24 EP. Compared to taking it on even ComPot ships where the same 6xREP restores 96 points of ComPot. This seems like this would take to the furthest degree the Gorn logistical ability with their most common attrition unit.

Is there anything that I am just missing (considering the whole DWE thing I was wrong about)? Mind you, I would still be building HDs as a REP fixing 2xHD+DD restores 19 ComPot which is just shy of 20 (4xDD) and decently above 16 (Evens). I know that if the Roms just go against the Gorns they don't have much recompense, but I hoping this extra 25% efficiency in taking damage might just hold off the end.

Naa, as the Gorn, with cheap Field Repair and extra money most turns, BDs are fine, and you really need them to bolster your tiny fleet.

Yes Dale, you are correct. But you must stack your battleforce with big hulls to survive the war, and that reduces the number of DDs you can effectively employ (Chris is speaking to this). The other problem is fleet size, you simply can't last long enough crippling DDs in any given battle - the Roms are likely to have plenty of fighters and could drop damage on you to win the overall encounter. The short answer is to use your field repair capacity to the maximum, but in my experience you can't afford to put enough DDs on the line to make your proposal work.
If you are short of money, you should shift to DD production.

If you are close to being short of money, I would prefer a mix of a BDS and two DD over 3BD.

When flush with money, churn out BD and BDS.

And you definately want BDE over DE.

You should try to avoid taking damage on BD as you imply. When they are in use for battlegroups, have some fighters fed forward and HD to take the damage. Given that you will repair the HD with field repair, there is no long term loss from crippling a bigger hull.

By the way, if you are fielding your BCs/CCs/CMs on the line, your line should be made entirely of those units and perhaps a few fighters or a carrier (if the carrier cannot be mauled).

I much prefer Gorn BGs and 6 big ships to 11 big ships on the the line. Gorn fighters just dont cut it.

No. Gorn CV and HV carrier groups versus _Romulan maulers_ don't cut it.

That is why I love the Gorn CVD. It is escorted as a _heavy carrier_, it has 12 fighters, and both it and its escorts can be CEDS repaired via those cheap Gorn repair ships. A Gorn CVD can be modified in Y179, Y180 and Y181 to defacto ACS via upgrading one squadron to heavy fighters. Both the CVD fighter squadrons can further be modified with megafighter markers in PO.

The BCH hulled BCV (versus Romulan War DNs) or BCS are also a good deal in four ship groups versus Romulan maulers.

The best Gorn CV deal deal is actually the DWV in Y179 when the CVEG formation shows up. Compared to a (3xCW + 3xDW) battle group, a CVEG with a CV or HV plus a DWV will be a five ship CV group with 10 fighters, 42 compot, allow multiple platforms for Prime Teams that are mauler proof, and repair easier besides.

You can feed our fighters forward. Loses a little compot, but evades the whole direct-on-carrier problem. And it's not too bad once heavy fighters and megafighters come out.
David S,

Damaged carrier escorts are also attrition units and _Offensive_ attrition units at that. Gorn line units require a retrograde to a base for the repair ships and repair tugs to arrive and do their thing. Carrier groups can be within six hexes of a base and get repaired via CEDS.

The combination of cheap Gorn repair and CEDS makes the Gorn Carrier line potentially one of the most deadly to deal with save for the fact they use minimum escorts versus the most mauler prone race around.

That makes the CVD the priority Gorn carrier built at a rate of one a year, since it is classed as a heavy carrier per the SIT. Besides the CVD, build one other medium carrier, a DWV (when allowed) and the single allowed FCR per year. After six turn you are going to have a reasonable CV strike fleet to lead assaults on the strongest Romulan strong points.

The Gorns will have time and budget to produce two such fleets prior to PF deployment.

Years 178-181 should see one Heavy fighter carrier annually. Build one CSV in Y178 and convert one CVD squadron to heavy fighters in each of Y179-Y181. Defineately build the VHP pod for cheap resupply HF factors.

After the Gorns get their CVEG formation in Y179, convert a number of ther HVs to HVPs and use them with DWVs. Use the 5(HVP+DWV) group to alternate with 5(CVD+DWV) groups in taking damage on the battle line.

When Mega-fighters appear in Y179 build one normal and one heavy megafighter a year until the second turn of PF deployment in Y182. then concentrate on PFs.

If the Romulans go for their Demon-, Mega-, or Omnihawk War DNS, build the allowed CVS to match and convert them to BCV in Y180. Since they are outside the normal production system all three CVS can be converted to BCV the same turn in Y180S. (That little fact is also an official ruling. I already asked and had it confirmed down in F&E Q&A.) Gorn CVS are also much easier to replace since they don't count against any Gorn CV build limits if destroyed. At least while the Romulan War DNS are around.

Once PF production starts, build a your division control ship on PF2 -- preferably by converting a HV or MDV -- and be satified because any further MCS will be at the price of SCS as both are heavy carriers.

After that, one SCS and one BCS a year should be your goal, with the BCS coming from the conversion of the CL hulled CVs to BCS if possible.
At the end of the General war you will have three carrier strike fleets that are fully capable of taking down even PF hyped SBs with Romulan battle line support. It will be dicy versus SBX or capitol assaults, but _everything_ is dicy versus those.

I completely disagree with GOrn Heavy Fighter uses. Much better and cheaper to go with the fighters you have and wait for PFs.

Chris F,

What are you disagreeing with?

The existance of Gorn heavy fighters at all?

Rule (530.0) allows existing fighter squadrons on medium and heavy carriers to be upgraded for 4 EP or two free fighter factors after the HF deployment date.

Prior to that you have to build CSV or ACS to get HF deployed.

My plan calls for one new build Gorn CSV in Y178 and the conversion of one normal fighter squadron to heavy fighters oper year on CVD heavy carriers until Gorn PF deployment turn 2 in Y182F.

As for the VHP, it is a bargain for the Gorn since it can also serve as an FCR to reload normal fighters as well as heavy fighters.

If the Gorn could afford to switch to an ALL heavy fighter setup, that would be something, but so far, I have not been able to see any good reason to spend an extra dime on Heavy fighters combined with regular fighters.

Best to go with CVDs and a pair of normal carriers. Its cheaper in the long run, and there is only 6 turns between heavy fighters and PFs for the Gorn.

Regarding Gorn CV's, in my FtF game with jimi we have for the first time got to Gorn envolvement, just hit 175 and saw that I can produce CMV's which seem to be the same exact ship as the CVS but does not have any limitations and is not listed as conjectural. I'm surprised that I do not see more people taliking about building these, am I missing something about this ship?

Well, you can still build a maximum one 1 per year and convert another. Just uses your CM hull rather than your BC hull.
but there is nothing illegal about it that I am missing, just seems too much of a good thing with it being the same stats as the CVS that has such severe limitations

It's a hull-availability issue.

Only 2 CM a turn (1 built, 1 converted), by any means.

If you then decide to take 2 of those 4 per year (1 subbed, 1 converted by CV limits) to make a CMV, it's your choice.

Then building a MDS is counted against that 2 limit also.

How does one combat the Stasis ship, Penal ship combo? I am about to lose 3 Ranger/LM/LB cruisers a round to direct fire from stasis ships and have nothing to counter it effectively. If it weren't for Stasis ships I can actually hold the Klingon front for 2-3 more turns before they can hit my capital. If I lose 6 cruisers before killing the Stasis, I won't hold it but 1 turn.

To explain the combo. He has a stasis ship and a penal ship on the line. I direct fire the Stasis ship, only to have his penal ship take the hit. He stasis 3 LM and direct fires all of them to die.

Next round he does it again with penal frigate, I lose 3 more cruisers

Next round he does it again, but finally looses the stasis ship. I lose another 3 cruisers.

All this time my 33 points of Com Pot are lost so I am down 3 ships per turn.

9 cruisers to a frigate, cruiser penal and a stasis!!!!!!!

It's backdraft turn 2 so I don't have any carrier groups yet.

James:

It must be a D7A that is attempting to use three beams; you are using CO (312.222) rules correct?

Other things that can help:

A. Obtain an EW Shift - See (312.44); this will affect the SFG die roll but I don't
think you can win the EW shift in the early war with the Klingons.

B. Stack the battle force with at least three or four frigates - this way, if the SFG rolls go your way, you can choose a HN or CU on a "Defender Selects" or 50% of the time they are frozen on a "Random" results. Also note that he is only likely to get all three cruisers about 30% of the time; see chart below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>D7A</th>
<th>Roll</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
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<tr>
<td>1st Attempt</td>
<td>Target</td>
<td>Target</td>
<td>Random</td>
<td>Random</td>
<td>Def Sel</td>
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<tr>
<td>2nd Attempt</td>
<td>Target</td>
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<td>Random</td>
<td>Def Sel</td>
<td>Def Sel</td>
<td>Nothing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd Attempt</td>
<td>Target</td>
<td>Random</td>
<td>Random</td>
<td>Def Sel</td>
<td>Nothing</td>
<td>Disaster</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

C. Pick a high BIR as he must also pick "3" to use his SFG. Remember also that J-ships and SFG-ships are damaged at 1-1 so then if you score at least 16 points you can knock them both off the line; 20 points kills the D7A and 24 gets both.

PS: what ships do you have available in the battle hex?

By [James McCubbin (Jmccubbin)] on Sunday, February 20, 2005 - 01:18 pm: Edit
If I build all my HN as SC I might just win that EW shift.

Can't remember the exact ships, but I have overbuild 6 RN converted later to LM. Rangers can be overbuild at 12 + fighter cost. I took that option rather than PDU, and it certainly paid off on the Lyran boarder, but it may hurt me on the klingon border. I have deciced to build all my HN as SC.

Klingons put both Stasis ships on my border.

By [Greg Ernest (Grege)] on Sunday, February 20, 2005 - 01:32 pm: Edit
James:

You can only sub one SC for an HN each turn; the others would need to be conversions.

You seem to imply that you are fighting a defensive war. If so, stay with your bases and use their EW.

Just be glad he doesn't wait and put two D7A's together in the same line so he can try for six of your ships at once.

By [Daniel G. Knipfer (Dgknipfer)] on Sunday, February 20, 2005 - 03:44 pm: Edit
Chuck,

Yes we are using the updates in CO. No James isn't going to win the EW war on
later turns even though he had a slight advantage this last round (I'm a better coach than that)

But it's not quite as bad as James is implying for the Hydran. Our Klingon player hit a BATs with the fleet the SFG ships are in (they couldn't reach anything else). James cut his losses at that BATs by getting out of dodge. Now it's the Alliance turn.

Greg, Roger (our Klingon player) did use the two SFG ships together.

when you say that the penal ship is taking the hit I think you are making a mistake.

the penal ship doesn't prevent you from DDing the stasis ship, it just makes it more expensive

normally DDing a stasis ship would cost 8 damage points and your one DD attack adding a D6M that the klingons decide to use in sacrifice mode it now means that it will take 16 points of damage (8 to cripple the D6M, and 8 to cripple the D7A). for 24 points of damage you kill them both

also note that if a D7A attempts to freeze both ships it runs a very substantial risk of breakdown, at which time it becomes even easier to kill and doesn't freeze any ships

D7A has no chance of breakdown with 2 freezes. Going for the third give a chance.

David, I think you are meaning a D6J instead of a D6M.

Yes this next turn is Alliance, but since one cannot win a defensive war, I plan to go offensive which means I need to deal with Rogers Stasis.

I did not know I could continue to hit the D7A after the penal ship took the hit, and it looks like the penal ship AND the D7A is DD at 1-1 rather than 2-1. With this knowledge, I am not as worried.

I will do my best to win the EW war, them hunters have now found a new purpose in life. I just might have to convert one of those BATTS to SB so I can do all the conversions I need.
mike, yep, I missed by one key

James, you didn't do enough damage to hit both.

Chris, Roger was firing into an EW shift of 1 so any die role of 6 would be a failure.

Daniel, It was not that fight I was concerned with. It was future fights. I don't have the rules to look up my options so I had to ask for help. It's kinda hard for a CU, CR, SC and a LM to have enough damage to hurt one ship let alone 2.

Now with this knowledge, Roger is doomed! Mu ha ha ha ha!

Quick addendum

Yup, Hydran scouts are much better than hunters. I treat them a little like 5-compot ships as an easy measure to judge good they are. Put them in battlegroups with KNs/CRs, especially when faced with stasis while using a cruiser line.

Just to confirm, the way the penal sacrifice mission works is:-

You do X damage.

First, you *must* subtract any minus points from the previous round. If the enemy had any sense, this would be at least 5.

Then, you *must* cripple the penal ship at 1:1 (8 pts if D6J). This does not count as a DD attack. You can also finish off the penal ships for another 4 (D6J) points, and that also does not count as a DD attack.

Then you can kill the D7A at 1:1 as well, for another 12 points.

Assuming 5 minus point then,

you need 13 to cripple the D6J
you need 17 to kill the D6J
you need 21 to cripple the D6J and D7A
you need 25 to cripple the D6J and kill the D7A
you need 29 to kill both ships.

25-29 can sometimes be quite hard to achieve when you have ships frozen, so
trying to shift his statis roll with EW is an important thing to do. At the very least, it will force him to increase his EW, which will decrease his compot somewhat. When you see this combo, it is essential you choose high BIR unless you are so bad that high BIR will not bag you the stasis ship.

By Clell Flint (Clell) on Monday, February 21, 2005 - 07:40 am: Edit

David sounds like this: "Yup, Hydran scouts are much better than hunters. I treat them a little like 5-compot ships as an easy measure to judge good they are. Put them in battlegroups with KNs/CRs, especially when faced with stasis while using a cruiser line." could be the basis of a Tac note. I never thought of that have to try it in my next solo game.

By Sean Dzafovic (Sdzafovic) on Monday, February 21, 2005 - 07:49 am: Edit

Also remember that fighters based on a frozen ship are not affected, so a frozen RN loses 60% of its compot, but not all.

By Lawrence Bergen (Lar) on Monday, February 21, 2005 - 08:34 am: Edit

First, you *must* subtract any minus points from the previous round. **If the enemy had any sense, this would be at least 5.**

Don't take this the wrong way but I think what you are trying to have changed over in Gen Discuss is on many levels no different that what you are saying would be foolish not to do here.

"Arranging" plus or minus points for a desired effect is either a strategy or an exploit it cannot be both.

The same slandered Klingon that 'arranges' plus points in the capital hex to protect ships (crippled units) in the next round (or pursuit round) is applauded for 'arranging' minus points to protect ships (a D7A/D6J combo) in this example. Somehow this seems very much a double standard. Nick please add this to your knowledge base as you present the other case to SVC.

By David Lang (Dlang) on Monday, February 21, 2005 - 09:01 am: Edit

also 'arranging' minus points against hydrans is really only possible if you direct against a single unit and only do exactly the amount of damage nessasary to kill it. and even then getting 5+ minus points will only happen if you kill a carrier or Paladin (or in the very unlikly event that you manage to kill all the fighters in a hydran fleet and they don't have anything 10 compot or smaller to end up taking the damage on)

By David Slatter (Davidas) on Monday, February 21, 2005 - 09:11 am: Edit

Huh?

The Hydrans do X damage to you the previous round. They normally tell you to take it. You take X-1 damage (typically) on whatever you want and then cripple
an F5L.

Bingo. Five minus points for the next round subtracted from Hydran damage. Unpreventable unless the Hydrans Dirdam one of your ships for exactly X damage.

Just for the record, I hate the +/- point rule and the whole sleuth of artificial tactics it generates, but really do not want things changed just for my sake at this stage. I personally would prefer that minus points were only allowed to be generated involuntarily (i.e. due to enemy dirdamming PDUs or carriers and minus points come from unhomed fighters). Similarly, I would prefer that plus points could only be generated voluntarily (when self-damaging your own fleet) to remove the swizz on the PDU business as dicussed in general dicussions.

By David Lang (Dlang) on Monday, February 21, 2005 - 09:15 am: Edit

David S, yep, I've been up too long, I was thinking the klingon damage against the hydrans.

By David Slatter (Davidas) on Monday, February 21, 2005 - 09:21 am: Edit

The real killer on stasis is if the K/L crippled a battletug for -11 points the previous round. They then put in a huge line with a D6J, two stasis ships, a D6M, and two D5S in the line along with a D6S in the scout box.

i.e.

C8 D7A D7A D6M D6J DN DN BT [D5S D5S D5 F5L F5 F5] {D6S} 3D6D

117 compot, 10 EW.

You will really have trouble matching this EW as the alliance, and will probably have one or two shifts against you. About 3-4 of your ships will be frozen, and you need what will now seem a huge 31 to kill a stasis ship. Lastly, once the coalition has the two stasis ships in place, the other assets are quite easy to assemble, although they may have to use BCs instead of DNs/BTs and they may not have 3 D6Ds.

This isn't so much a problem when the enemy attack your SBs, it's just a monster if you hit it on conterattacking or if you are defending something smaller. It's even worse if the coalition is defending a base.

This is also the reason why the Hydrans must have a good carrier fleet. Attacking and facing this kind of line is ruinous with the cruiser fleets, at least after the first round, and you can't always be retreating from this else you get nowhere.

By Lawrence Bergen (Lar) on Monday, February 21, 2005 - 10:33 am: Edit

I thought that by rule -7 is the cap regardless of what you do in overcrippling except when its -14.
I agree on the plus/minus thing. As a house rule we have always pushed for the minimum +/- leftover. The cap on the minus points has never bothered us since we have always applied the ethics of our own house rule.

By Todd Lovas (Qwerty) On Monday, February 21, 2005 - 10:48 am: Edit

David,

Yeap you can do that. You can do exactly that.

That is the result of the Klingons using at VERY LARGE portion of their specialty ships on turn four in Hydran theatre. If they hit this hard, the Hydrans should suffer. As the Hydrans you have to pick your battles.

By David Lang (Dlang) On Monday, February 21, 2005 - 10:49 am: Edit

no, there isn't a limit to minux points. as SVC clarified in the CL article, you can use 1 point of damage to cripple a B-10 to generate 19 minus points if you want to (I remember that because it was an example I brought up during the discussion to attempt to show how it could be abused, SVC then decided to allow it and used me example :-( )

By David Slatter (Davidas) On Monday, February 21, 2005 - 10:49 am: Edit

the -7 limit only applies to pursuit battles (528.413).

-11 points have a strange equivalent in SFB. It's like going into a SFB battle with a ~160 point armour belt protecting the fleet as a whole. Makes your F5 look really butch.

By Lawrence Bergen (Lar) On Monday, February 21, 2005 - 12:07 pm: Edit

An F5 with an earring...

LOL

By Christopher E. Fant (Cfant) On Monday, February 21, 2005 - 12:14 pm: Edit

heh.

By David Slatter (Davidas) On Monday, February 21, 2005 - 12:20 pm: Edit

Another way of viewing it SFB wise.

"Oh no! We've scored an internal against the battletug! Now it can cripple itself, pull out, allow another ship in, and generate 160 points of armour for the enemy fleet!"

"If only we hadn't done that internal"

"What idiotic gunner did that? We all know that we should target a ship and blow it up exactly, and not shoot any more so that they can't do this!"
"Yeah, It's amazing how those extra phaser one shots bend in space to hit exactly the target you don’t want to to allow this armour to spring up"

And if you didn't understand that, that's just how weir'd minus points are.

Perhaps if you viewed it as a series of engamgements, over a 6 month time period (like it is in F&E).

David, unlike in an SFB game where YOU, the commander of the entire fleet controls every single action, F&E is supposed to be a symbol where YOU are the emporor, NOT the commander of every single ship, fighter, PF, PDU etc in your empire. You control where the fleets go, the captians, admirals etc do the actual fighting. Unfortunatelly these captians, admirals do not concentratre every single phaser, disruptor, photon, hellbore, ESG onto one single target every turn. Unfortunatelly things get crippled instead of killed. That is how the game is supposed to be played. What you are implying in that post above is where the player gets to choose specifically every single point of damage, you cannot (and should not) be able to do so.

F&E really should NEVER, EVER be compared to an S.8 SFB action. But it could be compared to the Admirals Game campaign.

I assure you, the results will be more similar.

Lar, your house rule was the way the official rules were before 2K. I always wondered why the change. Thanks to Dlang for shedding some bit of light on the circumstances surround the decision.

That sounds about right to me too. F&E by its nature is a campaign so it compares well to an SFB campaign.

"Daniel, It was not that fight I was concerned with. It was future fights. I don't have the rules to look up my options so I had to ask for help. It's kinda hard for a CU, CR, SC and a LM to have enough damage to hurt one ship let alone 2."
Now with this knowledge, Roger is doomed! Mu ha ha ha ha!"

Well I think that the Klingons won't have to worry about approach battles. And yes when they hit the SBs they'll start to loose SFG ships. But if they chew up 4 to 8 cruisers at each SB battle, I'll be happy. But then, I'm the Lyran and I've got about 80 EP in damage to repair next turn so if you're chasing SFG ships I'm happy. 😊 (No offence Roger)

By Roger Rardain (Instigator) on Monday, February 21, 2005 - 04:29 pm: Edit

None taken.

My response to James is:

Bring.
It.
On.

😊

By James McCubbin (Jmccubbin) on Monday, February 21, 2005 - 08:42 pm: Edit

Roger.... Bringing it to ya. And if that combined task force flees, I'll be calling the Klingons cowards for the rest of the game. 😊

Who cares if I outgun that fleet 2-1, you're Klingon aren't you?

By David Slatter (Davidas) on Tuesday, February 22, 2005 - 04:27 am: Edit

Jimi

The point is more that a handful of points of (SFB) damage, "involuntarily" applied to a battletug, can suddenly be made into a 160-point armour banelt the following F&E round at the cost of crippling the Battletug with damage that wasn't done.

And Chris, you are quite correct that no specifics have been made on what an F&E round consists of in SFB. Regardless, it must consist of some kind of SFB engagement, or series of engagements, and the unrealistic 160 point armour belt will be there whatever the engagement is.

By Jimi LaForm (Laform) on Tuesday, February 22, 2005 - 10:36 am: Edit

DSlatter very true, but then again when the enemy self cripples his own ships, in effect, you just DD'd an enemy battletug for 1 single point of damage too didn't you? So all things even out don't they?
Not really. This messing about with the battletug means you can't destroy any key ships, which is what you really want to do.

NM Slatter, let's just agree to disagree on this. You think there is a problem because someone decides to do extra damage on their fleet. I view that over-crippling as a victory.

You do 25 points of damage and choose to direct on a D7 for 24 leaving 1 point left for the klingon to decide where he takes it...hell yes its fine for him to take in on a battle tug and go -11 (He is paying for that -11 in many ways; thats a high density ship off the line, risking it in a pursuit battle possibly). You let him eat 25 general he does not get to self cripple 3 D7's and then take a battle tug for -11...he has to uncripple one of those D7's and be only -3 (D7, D7, BattleTug). If someone is trying to go neg by manipulating what they take as self cripple in a certain order to get to one point remaining and then declaring the battletug, they are not playing correctly.

Going neg is part of the game, its tactics and strategy as to when you should or shouldn't direct on someone.

You let him eat 25 general he does not get to self cripple 3 D7's and then take a battle tug for -11...he has to uncripple one of those D7's and be only -3 (D7, D7, BattleTug).

MB, you need to explain the above, why couldn't a player do the 3xCA plus a BT... (bit cheesey to me but the rules DO allow it)...

Stewart is right that a Klingon player could self cripple 3xD7 and then spend the last point of a 25 point attack to overcripple a BT. But then if he did that I think I'd be jumping for joy as that's three cruisers and a BT I'm not fighting anymore.

You won't be jumping for joy when you find out he still has 6DNs and multiple specialist units ready to slaughter you next round, and you can't kill any of them (except perhaps a D6J if he is using stasis) because of that wretched -11.

Another point is that crippling BT's is a good idea, as you resolve 12 points of damage that only costs 2Ep to repair. It's a bit like taking 4 points of damage on fighters, because you don't have to repair the pod.

Besides, chances are that your other 24 pts would have crippled 3F5 and killed 9
fighters, not having crippled a single D7.

David, yes I would be jumping for joy because I still crippled 3 D7's and a BT when I only caused 25 points of damage. Sure I'll have a -11 next round, but that only lasts for one round. It's not like it has altered the game in any way other then one single round of combat.

Oh boy, game over, my enemy juggled his damage output so I have a -11 for a round of combat!

Jimi

There are three reasons why I disagree with you.

1) The enemy is unlikely to do this unless there will be another round of combat. This means that he only has to do this once and is not taking any more damage overall after that. Furthermore, he only need ensure -11 on the round before he goes big time. He could choose to end up being level after the bigtime round so as to mimimise further damage on big ships. When he's on level, he switches to a different battleline.

2) At some point, you have to kill those big enemy ships, else you will get these huge lines coming up time and again. It eventually gets to the point where all you see are DNs, specialist ships, and a damage-taking element once this -11 clocks up. You will lose the war if the coalition/other side can put up these lines indefinately.

3) While the enemy is putting up these lines, it ensures that he can inflict enough damage to kill one of your big ships unless you play the same game in return. If you allow him to kill big ships in exchange for not killing one back, this is a recipie for disaster. Now, you can try to mitigate things by putting up carrier lines, but these have less compot (even lower chance of killing an enemy big ship) and if the enemy is significantly better than you, they may not care about doing damage on 18 fighters, or they might have enough to take out your scout.

Now, there are some counters, but they arn't easy or always avialable. That's the game as is, and taking -11 is an excellent thing to do.

David, to rebut your points.

1) The goal of the Alliance is to hold off the enemy and fill his repair points to such a point where the enemy cannot repair his heavies quick enough. When the enemy is self crippling his valuable D7's and a BT to give himself a one turn 'push' on damage just put up a carrier line. He is not likely to do 44 damage to you so
he is unlikely to DD a CV group, just keep your Bir low. If he puts up an -11 round and retreats then let him retreat without pursuing, you've kept that hardpoint from his hands, victory for you. It just means he has to attack that point again next round. If there is one thing the Coalition cannot afford to do, it is to take too long to knock the Alliance out.

2) If the enemy is building a line that you propose you are looking at a C8(form) 2D5+D5S+3DW (BG), 6DN+2PT, 3D6D (DB), D6S (scout) for 137/7EW. This is about the best the coalition can do and still have cheap repairable units on the line. In my current game vs Tim I'm able to put up those kind of lines ONLY where the Lyrans are located, which happens to be in the static Kzinti/Hydran theatres so those results are not affecting the game nearly as wickedly as you seem to be thinking they are able to do so. I have conquered Kzintai and Hydrax. The Hydrans are offmap and the Kzinti's are offmap. Both have rebuilt their shipyards and the Coalition is barely holding onto Kzinti space. In fact, despite Tim's total unfamiliarity with fighting as the Alliance, he's learning how to fight effectively with the Alliance minor races and is making it nearly impossible for me to keep pressure in the Federation theatre. I have captured two homeworlds and I will probably lose the game despite my early victories.

3) I have put up killer lines for many many turns in our game. I have been able to kill only 1 CV group in all that time. I have been able to kill a couple DN's though. Despite my ability to kill MANY of his CA/CC's and threaten his CV groups I find myself in a stalemate. This is a stalemate that I will lose due to his ability to not only repair his cripples but also the ability to produce more. My economy far surpasses his, but my many cripples in all 4 theatres is beyond my ability to repair.

And to refute your last line of

Quote:

Now, there are some counters, but they aren't easy or always available. That's the game as is, and taking -11 is an excellent thing to do.

The counters to the killer Coalition lines is to not to resort to drastic alterations to the game. Play the war out, do not surrender because things look bad early (I had both minor alliance capitals by T8). Things will turn around in the Alliances favor.
If this was a tactical game, I could see your point but at the grand strategic level MANY things must be abstracted -- do you not agree?

Consider these abstractions:
Fighter factors
PF factors
Scout ratings
Maulers
(You get the point)

There are times in an SFB game where I caused more damage than I had any right to. In 1988 I was playing in squadron tourney where our 3 Fed cruisers (BCJ/CA/CA) were engaging 3 Gorn Cruisers (BCH/BC/BC). The Gorn had launched most of the pseudo torps that were now two hexes away and we were 4 hexes from the Gorns. We decided to try to knock-out a BC with 10 of our 14 torps and a few phaser shots – 8! of 10 photons connected popping the BC that was fully armed with two shot-gunned S-torps (note the date -1988). Since the Gorns were stacked together the resulting catastrophic explosion popped the other two Gorns because they too were loaded with shot-gunned torps. The 600+ point combined Gorn fireball was magnificent until we realized we were at range-4 from the three new suns and in those days range-4 from exploding ships got you 25% of the fireball – all three Fed cruisers were toasted less an escaped saucer section from one.

The point here is that in less than ONE normal F&E round, 95% of all the combatants were destroyed; had we been at range-5 we would have knocked them out with NO damage. In F&E the very best we could have gotten in one round 50% of 26 ComPot (13) vs 10% of 32 ComPot (3). You just cannot equate a strategic aspect with a tactical one in these gaming systems.

Okay.

It's the Tempo point. In most all of these examples your complaints are coming from the defenders point of view. You don't like it, leave. Can't afford to leave? Well that is just the way it goes.

Lets turn this around. Oh its so unfair for me to go into the Kzinti Homeworld. They get all those PDU's for free, they should count against the command rating, and so should the SB. Oh and that extra EW is so mean.

Oh wait you mean those "advantages" are the result of being FIXED defenses. Oh wait you mean I get the same stuff if he comes into my homeworld? Oh and nobody is forcing me to attack there, I have a choice.
The other thing that bothers me in all your examples David is that you give the Mean Coalition generally, everything. You give them 7+ DN's and all the speciality ships against the Hydran's. But then you say they have all this to use against the Kzinti's as well. You cannot have it both ways. The Klingons and Lyrans have alot, but not enough to hammer both simultaneously like you seem to think.

The alliance is the little boy that keeps having to put a finger in the holes of the dyke to prevent a flood, until the Army Corps of Engineers show up. Or in this case the Federation Economy.

uncloaks

None issue. Minus points = damage already done to the enemy in advance of when you should have.

Cheesily used sometimes, sure but any competant player regularly uses this to his/her advantage.

Hands up anyone who has ever overcrippled an escort to make sure the CV group was safe during pursuit.

/em hand raised.

Reducto ad absurdium. Tell you what I'll give you -5 points in every battle round - but you have to take that damage before the very first battle round of the first turn. Watches as the Entire Coalition Navy and Fixed defences explode. Waltzes into Klinshai. Thanks

/em happy dance with a discarded Bat'leth

By Richard Abbott (Catwhoorg) on Thursday, February 24, 2005 - 12:42 pm: Edit

Jimi

I have already established that the enemy is not crippling his D7s. Indeed, the
initial line you see might be something like:

**BT - [D5VPT-AD5PT-F5E] ifs ifs D5 [3D5 F5L 2F5] {D6S}**

The 25 you did here would hit 18 fighters, and F5L, and the Battletug unless you directed on a D5 or the F5E.

The next line, which can easily be available at one location from about turn 3 on each of the Hydran and Zin fronts can be:

**{D5S} C8 DN BC BC STT D7C CC CC [3D5 3DWS] {D6S}**

128-8EW down to 120-13EW. No prime teams included.

Replace the command cruisers with D7A's and a D6J if you have stasis, or possibly with one or two ifs (independent fighter squadrons). You take the damage on ifs and/or D5.

An all-Lyran line will be almost as good, suffering a little on the big EW units, while an all-klingon line will be down a little further (no DWS, BC/DN replaced with D7C/D7, maybe a spare C8), but may have the Drone tug to play with.

One can counter by putting the coalition in with -9 as the Zin (overcippiling a CV) before exposing a line with a number of CDs, CLDs, and SDFs. Hydrans just accept the loss of a cruiser, or hide behind the huge fighter stacks from CVs/TGVs/ICs etc.

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**By Jimi LaForm (Laform) on Thursday, February 24, 2005 - 12:48 pm:** Edit

Richard... you play DAOC?

that /em is reminiscent to another game I've played =)

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**By Lawrence Bergen (Lar) on Thursday, February 24, 2005 - 12:52 pm:** Edit

DAS you can put that line up all you want to and I will cringe every time (see motto below). That is EXCEPT when you bring it to my home planet. Then I will laugh you right out of the hex. Conservatively, 20 PDUs + SB + MB + FRD + my fleet at say 125. 362 with 6 EW (using only a SF I can put in a 4 pointer also if you like giving me 9...and dont forget I see your fleet first). This makes EW a wash and at 25% hits you for 91 points...spend em...91-11=80 for that one round.

Hydrans? Same static defense line with a larger fleet total gets me near 400 and you get to spend about 100. Have fun! What did your great line do to me? 137...hmmm seems like 34...I'll take that in fighters if you spend it or you can use your DD attack against my PDUs giving you minus points to burn through.
I will be smiling and wont even care if you leave and I dont get to pursue. Your dead capital ships will not be back and the cripples wont see me again for 2-3 turns. In which time I will have added back 8-12 PDUs....good luck.

Alliance motto everywhere but the capital planet: "Fight a round and run away...live to fight another day." This is an OLD tactic and yet very effective at getting the Coalition to play the game the way the Alliance wants it played.

By Michael Benson (Michaelbenson) on Thursday, February 24, 2005 - 12:54 pm: Edit

Stewart
Because its total cheeze...not in the current 302.6 section of the rules (just reread them for the first time in about 10 years), I'd have to go back to my 93, 90 and 89 sets to see if there was something different back then. If it was not in the rules back then, then its a home grown rule that my group has played with for so long due to the cheezyness that I took it as accepted. Lends itself to 302.616 though where you can't kill a ship if crippling it puts you in the neg. If your at -11 how can you possibly justify having a D7 self crippled? TOTAL CHEEZE

By Jimi LaForm (Laform) on Thursday, February 24, 2005 - 12:58 pm: Edit

Cheeze in who's eyes mate? yours? a few others eyes too maybe? Regardless, if my enemy is overcrippling his fleet than I take it as a bonus.

OK, my enemy has just taken 36 damage instead of the 25 I caused him, now he retreats to cover his fleet... bye bye enemy. I win the hex.

Remember folks, this is a strategic level game, not SFB on crack.

By Todd Lovas (Qwerty) on Thursday, February 24, 2005 - 01:15 pm: Edit

Richard Abbot

>None issue.
>Minus points = damage already done to the enemy in advance of when you should have.

So totally true.

A couple of options for the people that are unhappy about being not being able to control every single aspect of damage.

1. Play out every battle round in SFB. This seems to be the level of control you want so just do it.

2. Play the coalition in a full game to the total end and see if you really do win because your "cheats/cheeze" make you all powerfull.
3. Ask SVC the name of the WWII game that he mention playing (in college perhaps) that broke units down to like the sub squad level and made F&E look like tic tac toe in complexity and play that.

4. Or just tough it out and come up with a better counter tactic.

Personally even if I get frustrated sometimes I'd prefer that you choose #4 and stick with the greatest strategic board game ever made.

Michael Benson,
Under previous editions, it was legal to cripple a SB or an entire carrier group to resolve 1 point of damage. The latest revision requires the SB to give up a SIDS or the carrier group to cripple a single ship. But, you are still allowed to cripple any single ship, no matter what the size.

However, this abuse (with the penal ship addition) was what precipitated the -7/-14 limit on minus points in pursuit.

To be more accurate, it was legal to overcripple in previous editions, but there was a specific injunction that a player had to come as close as possible to absorbing the damage awarded so as to limit plus/minus points as much as possible.

In the current version, that restriction has been dropped. And that's just wrong.

Just chalk it up to the foibles of a Grand Strategy game -- it works the way it does because it works that way.

Or...The way it works is because that is the way it works.

Did you just say that???

'Just because' was always a favourite of mine 😊

The abstraction works...

In the current version, that restriction has been dropped. And that's just wrong.
Well, I really did not want to call ethics of anyone's opponents into question but this is what the whole thing seems to be about. If your games are lost because your opponent looks to exploit you with cheesy loopholes rather than exploit your faltering strategy then I would say its time to get a new game opponent. I have already stated that we have a house rule to resolve +/- points as close to ZERO as possible. We don't pull any punches...in fact we have even backed up during a turn when one side has made a rather huge or unintentional faux pas. No one wants to win like that and if you do its seems a LOT of time wasted for an empty victory.

Joe Stevenson and Pete Dimitri used to play like this, they reasoned that if you didn't play to your best ability then you could not appreciate the game nor could you learn how to play it better. They spent a ton of time playing early on and through this approach developed an incredible insight to how the game works. By eliminating mistakes they could effectively look at a particular strategy or tactic or aspect of the game. An insight good enough that Joe S. eventually became FEAR for a time and both he and Pete assisted with the development of the game and with creation of solid long term tactics that make this game much more enjoyable to play.

Me and Tim play the same way. When an opponent forgot to do something that was an obvious oversight neither of us has a problem fudging it and allowing the opponent to redo it. We'd rather play to enjoy each others company (and smack talk across the table) then to beat each other senseless and lose our friendship.

That's the only way I and my gaming buddy play, and we've been playing that way (especially when teaching each other new games) for over a decade.

At the same time, we resist as much as possible the temptation to "fix" things, because, for all we know, the game designer wanted it that way for a good reason and who are we to go mucking about with the game? After all, we both read the rules before we started.

Then again, lots of games, even the classics, have certain interactions that just didn't seem to be intended, and so we alter those in order to make for a better gaming experience.

We're also not above coming out with a judgement on a change to a game, even one we'd fit in with the classics (which is where we put F&E), especially if we think a mistake has been made.

Reminds me of when using carrier groups, if one overcrippled, fighters came back to balance...if it was a fighterless battle, then it became 'oh, well...'
As for seeing a 'faux-pas', well, one would ask if the other was actually finished with that phase (or turn) [all sales are final!]...since errors are a factor due to the fog of war...

I've been examining when it would be worthwhile to choose the pay-as-you-go system for F-111s over the annuity. I've reached the end of easy production models and would like to ask the F&E community for input as to which production models I should try next. For each production model, I've calculated the economics for three models of fighter losses:

A) Every carrier loses all F-111s twice a turn (maximum fighter lossage)

B) On average every carrier loses its F-111s once a turn (medium lossage)

C) On average every carrier loses its F-111s once a year (low lossage)

The 4th possibility (D) that could be considered would be no losses (just as some people will blow up/cripble ships instead of using up their PF flotillas), but the result of that is easy to see in that it will favor the pay-as-you-go system because the up-front cost is so disparate.

The production models I have tried so far are all optimal builds. You get the Ise and the Hyuga in Y177 and Y178, and then produce 2xF-111 carriers per turn starting at Y180 and stopping two years before the end of the game (on the idea that carriers pay for their fighters in 8 uses). The pay-as-you-go system is handicapped in that fighters are still replaced and paid for in these final four turns. In all cases, free fighter factors are used, and the remaining cost is born through direct purchase of fighter factors. Two models also include maximal A-20 carriers builds (1 a turn) in addition to the F-111 carrier builds. In this case, one of the initial two NVHs is built as an NVA. I should note at this point that I do not really expect the Federation to spend this large amount of money on fighter factors in a real game. These is just one class of models. That makes two models. I have also done two more including FCFs and FCAs. Thus the four production models I have examined are:

1) Maximal F-111s, No FCFs
2) Maximal F-111s, A-20s, No FCFs or FCAs
3) Maximal F-111s & FCFs
4) Maximal F-111s, A-20s, FCFs/FCAs alternate.

For production model 4, I should say that one turn would see 2xNVH, NVA, FCF, and the next turn would see 2xNVH, NVA, FCA, for example. I didn't include any costs for the carriers or escorts themselves, I just considered the cost of the fighters. Also, in no production model so far have I considered TG pods.
Preliminary results:

The annuity system is very strongly favored (much lower cumulative EP cost) if you are going to be replacing your fighters twice a turn (optimal fighter lossage), no matter what the production model. Also, as expected, the use of FCFs favors the annuity system, as that is cheapening the use of F-111s for the annuity system, but pays the same cost in the pay-as-you-go system. If you are also building A-20 carriers, the models start to swing towards the pay-as-you-go system as you can use free fighter factors for that instead of the disadvantageous FFF -> F111 factors. The Fighter loss model of once/year (C) clearly favors the pay-as-you-go system, even at the end of the game when you have stopped building new carriers for two years. The medium loss model (B) is close between the two systems and tips to one side or the other depending on the presence of FCxs and A-20 carriers.

But, if you are still reading by this point, all this is built upon these maximal build models. There is a lot of money spent on fighters to get the maximal builds, and thus isn't very realistic. What I would like is for F&E people out there to propose more realistic production models. Possibilities (just to spark ideas) include only spending x EP on fighters above the free factors. Presumably this would be 10 EP or more per turn because the payment for base F-111s starting in Y181 costs 10 EP a turn (for five turns). I would think that such a limit would mean that F-111 carriers would rise slowly but steadily under the annuity system and would rise rapidly but stop at some point under the pay-as-you-go system. I haven't calculated at which point annuity would pull ahead, but it could be sufficiently close to the end of the game to that pay-as-you-go gives you a greater number of ship-turns.

I am even open to just running my fighter loss models against someone's favorite build schedule (I would hope and plead that the schedule be reasonable, however). As it is, I would just like to identify playing styles in which the pay-as-you-go system would be the logical option. Thanks for getting to the bottom of this monster.

Dale - My only experience in that era of the game came from playtesting Winds of Fire sectors C&D. Given that it was a short time frame, I went with the pay as you go for the reason you pointed - annuity does not pay for itself in the short term. Also, I was using the free fighters to upgrade my CVAs to SCS, so none of those were available. I frankly don't recall building that many carriers. There were a couple of reasons - money and hulls. The Feds start to feel the effects of exhaustion in this time frame plus XTPs start kicking in. That leads directly to the next point of hull availability. I built as many x-ships as I could each turn, this took away the new hulls for substitution and I was loathe to pull ships off the front line to convert (with the exception of the CVAs).
I'm not sure any of this rambling helps, but there it is.

By Trent Telenko (Ttelenko) on Saturday, March 12, 2005 - 04:55 pm: Edit

Dale,

You need to factor in the the 50 ep 'annuity surcharge' for 'annuity' F111 factors on bases versus the fact the Feds can strip pay 'as you go' F111's from uninvolved bases and/or the pool.

The game effect of "pool" annuity base F111's being used on new ship production just has not been gamed yet so there are no rules questions available for guidance here.

By Trent Telenko (Ttelenko) on Saturday, March 12, 2005 - 05:07 pm: Edit

One more thing.

The Feds get X-EP production in Y180. They don't get exhausted until five or six turns later.

As a minimum a Fed DN plus two CC a turn are built as CX with X-EP, thus freeing 36 normal EP to purchase 18 annuity F111 factors a turn right there.

With the Y177-Y179 limited HF deployment, that buys 13 or 15 annuity F111 carriers prior to exhaustion.

The best route to get A20 factors is to upgrade NVL/NVS to CSV and CVS to CAV. That costs 8 EP plus conversion costs per A20 carrier. Thus by exhaustion the Feds could have seven to eight A20 carriers.

After exhaustion the 15 free annuity fighters could support one new F111 carrier and two F-18 to A20 carrier upgrades a year for about four additional EPs.

By Dale Lloyd Fields (Dylkha) on Saturday, March 12, 2005 - 10:43 pm: Edit

I completely forgot about stripping F-111s(/PFs) from bases. That should pull the cost down for the pay-as-you-go even further. One should never have to pay for the initial 9 F-111 factors on a carrier as there will be 6 squadrons in the capital hex and at least 6-10 around that can be passed through by free strat move. So far I haven't considered upgrades but I'll construct a: F-111s from scratch, A-20s by conversion production model.

By Trent Telenko (Ttelenko) on Sunday, March 13, 2005 - 01:48 pm: Edit

> The production models I have tried so far are
> all optimal builds. You get the Ise and the
> Hyuga in Y177 and Y178, and then produce
> 2xF-111 carriers per turn starting at Y180 and
> stopping two years before the end of the game
Actually, you get one F111 tender in the spring of years Y177-Y179 and one A20 tender in fall of those same years. Those tenders don't necessarily have to be NVH or stay NVH. You can substitute CVH, NCS or DCS for the NVH builds at the price of losing the economic fighter factor discounts of the early NVH.

You also have two prototype FCF in Y177-Y178 and one each prototype SAH and LAH Y178-Y179. The FCA comes in Y177 per FO and has no production limits. Its fighter factors can resupply A20s or any other fighter save for F111s. Unlimited FCA production is an important development given the arrival of megafighters for the Feds in Y179.

These is just one class of models. That makes two models. I have also done two more including FCFs and FCAs. Thus the four production models I have examined are:

1) Maximal F-111s, No FCFs
2) Maximal F-111s, A-20s, No FCFs or FCAs
3) Maximal F-111s & FCFs
4) Maximal F-111s, A-20s, FCFs/FCAs alternate.

For production model 4, I should say that one turn would see 2xNVH, NVA, FCF, and the next turn would see 2xNVH, NVA, FCA, for example. I didn't include any costs for the carriers or escorts themselves, I just considered the cost of the fighters. Also, in no production model so far have I considered TG pods.

There are other costs involved here besides EPs and fighter factors.

First, turns 24-27 are when the Federation has both a full wartime economy and an X-economy going simultaneously. It is also when the Federation can use every major conversion to turn a CA or CC into a CX. There are huge opportunity costs for either using a major conversion for a NVH or a CA build slot other F-111 carriers like the CVH or DCS respectively.

Federation players will substitute for a NCA or an NCL to get their first F111 carrier and go for the F111 three EP minor conversions in the SIT for their second F111 tender to get more CXs with the freed new production and major conversion slots.

Second, the two VHP and two AVP pods are available in one each in Y177 and...
Y178 respectively. They will play a very heavy role in the annuity calculations due to their early arrival compared to the majority of heavy fighter carriers.

[Note: Those pods are particularly daunting to the Coalition in that they are single weight pods and all four pods showing up on a pair of tugs for an SB assault is a certainty. Especially when the Feds also show up with several CVBGs to burn those factors, a few CXs to play mauler and SAFs to absorb several rounds of Coalition directed attacks.]

Third, you have two other units that field/burn F111s: the ASC, LAH and SAH auxiliaries and the CF1 casual F111 squadrons for bases, PDU and Monitors. Unlike other Aux-CV, F111 factors are at full CV rates of 2 EP per factor. They are unaffordable at annuity rates. The CF1 are one EP per factor at annuity rates, but they will never be used often enough to justify the cost either.

Fourth, The conversion model has a few hitches, namely, the limited number of CVS available for conversion by the time of F111 deployment. There is also the temptation to convert/build NVL/NVS as/to NCVs or CVPs.

I have seen a number of player games now start taking CVS and turning them into CVDs. A CVD is a dead end as far as SIT conversions to heavy fighter carrier designs are concerned.

Meanwhile NCVs are available in Y175 thanks to FO, the same time as NVS are. NCV cannot be converted to A20s and their NCS F111 conversion is a major conversion. No NVS/NVL means no NVS/NVL->CSV conversions are available. NCL based CVP's have the same non-conversion problem as the CVD.

Too maximize late war heavy fighter conversions players are going to have to trade off for fewer of the "optimum" mid-war CV designs like the CVD and NCV to get them.

They are also going to have to build every available NCA so they have a pool of them for the NHV conversions in the late war prior to DDX deployment.

By Dave Butler (Dcbutler) on Sunday, March 13, 2005 - 03:02 pm: Edit

Minor Nit: The Feds can't use major conversions to do the CA/CC->CX conversion; you need a SBX for each conversion. Given that the Feds can't possibly have a second SBX in service until T29, you don't need to worry about X-conversions for a while. (Now, you're right that using the CA slip to build something other than a CX might not be a good idea.)

As a general comment, I can't see myself using the F111, though I've never played the Feds late-war. Maybe they turn out to be the greatest thing since sliced bread, but the whole pain of creating a separate logistics network to handle resupply seems like a waste of resources. My current guess is that I'd choose "pay as you go" then never build any of the things.
Given that the Feds can't possibly have a second SBX in service until T29....

Dave,
How is this statement fact?
on T24 the Feds can only produce CX's, with the limitations of subs available, the Feds will have a significant excess of XP's that they could do at least one more SBX before in the ensuing 5 turns.

Trent:
Please read rule (523.11) again and please tell where it says I can't use XTPs to convert a non-X ship to an X-ship at any SB with a major conversion available?

Tim: SBX aren't available until Y182 (I just double checked the latest Fed SIT); you do get the free one when you go X, the rest you need to wait for. Since you can't do a conversion until after the Date Available, you can start your upgrade(s) in S182 (Turn 28), and you have the SBX(s) available for duty in F182 (Turn 29); until then, you either stockpile XTP or use them as EP, I guess (or build X-colonies, if you're using PO).

Trent: I'm away from my books until Monday, but my recollection of the rules was: (a) you needed an SBX to do an X-conversion, and (b) it was neither major nor minor, but rather X, and thus doable at any SBX. Now, it could well be that I've forgotten or mis-remembered a rule, if so, sorry. I'll post again late on Monday once I've figured out where the confusion lies.

Trent, see 523.115. "Such conversions can only be performed by an SBX."

That seems pretty clear to me.

There once was a time where the annuity for F111s was a viable decision.

Now, with, the better A-20 carriers available, if you have the money, you pay the 2EP/fighter factor on those A20s, and if you want a little bit more oomph, you can get some pay-as-you go F111 carriers.
On playing the winds of fire scenario, paying the annuity for the bases is simply not a viable way to use money, and that's the main reason for taking the pay-as-you-option. Why spend 50EPs (+ carrier fighter costs) for the privilege of having annuity-type fighters on your F111 carriers when you can spend nothing and choose to have annuity-type fighters on your better A20 carriers?

And as trent said, being able to afford those F111 FCR-type pods can really make a difference.

Another thing I noticed on playing winds of fire was that with just a few F111 carriers, you didn't have to pay that much for their pay-as-you-go fighters anyway. It was easy to take damage on those fighters last, and you never had that many of them anyway.

By Tim Losberg (Krager) on Monday, March 14, 2005 - 11:07 am: Edit

Ooops,
Sorry Dave, forgot to look at the SIT, just assumed that SBX's came out when you got X-Tech

By Mike Covert (Boneyman1769) on Friday, April 15, 2005 - 01:32 pm: Edit

There is a strategy I have wanted to try, but never the time or opportunity. I have always been intrigued by the thought of the Lyrans fighting a One Front war and the Klingons fighting a Two Front war. Rather than having forces spread across Three Fronts they could concentrate their forces. I was thinking Lyrans vs. Kzintis and Klingons vs. Hydrans and Federation. Obviously, the Lyrans could switch the Kzinti for the Hydrans. Has anyone out there tried this strategy? If so please pass on any info on its effectiveness. I welcome comments from other players on their thoughts on the viability of this effort. My thoughts revolve around concentration of effort, strength, and logistics.

By Bill Schoeller (Bigbadbill) on Friday, April 15, 2005 - 02:25 pm: Edit

One of the great advantages of using the Lyrans and Klingons together is their ability to complement each other. The Klingons have good attrition units, but need strong command ships. Adding 4 Lyran BC's to a CVA line is powerful. Using stasis ships and drone bombardment (and a 4ew scout) gives the Lyran a significant advantage as well.

If the Lyrans concentrate solely on one front, they will have difficulty defending Klingon space from the opponent they are fighting, and the Klingons will have difficulty defending Lyran space on the other. The Klingons can not strat to a Lyran node to set up a reserve fleet and vice-versa.

After (or IF) the Hydrans are driven off map, if they have 100 ship equivalents, it would be reasonable to have just the Lyrans bottle them up to allow the Klingon
to concentrate its forces (and specialty ships) on the more active fronts. The Lyrans would have a very difficult time forcing the Hydrans off map by themselves. They eventually would need to take out the 1st fleet SB, and the Klingon border bats. If the Lyran set up a mb in 1013 they could use that point to launch their offensive against Hydran strong points on the Klingon front.

It would be hard for the Klingons to stop a Hydran expedition to Fed space if they were concentrating on the Kzin front.

By John Doucette (Jkd) on Saturday, April 16, 2005 - 02:31 pm: Edit

It really all depends on what you mean by a one front war. If you mean that the Lyrans (or the Klingons) only fight defensively, then, no, it won't work, as the Kzin and the Hydrans each have enough force to deal with one opponent at a time. But, if what is meant is that one power is contributing the lion's share while the other does its Rommel in North Africa bit, then yes, it's possible.

By Mark Ermenc (Mermenc) on Tuesday, April 19, 2005 - 12:35 am: Edit

In the game our group is playing, the Lyrans tried to do just that ... they tried to take Kzinti space with everything they had, and left Hydran space for the Klingons.

Rather than let them, the Hydrans launched their expedition directly north, smashing the border bats and SB.

The Lyrans continued to try and ignore the Hydrans and focus on the Kzinti, and while the Klingons started sandpapering away the Hydrans, the Hydrans slammed into the Lyran capitol. That forced the Lyrans into a two-front war.

Now, this was an extreme example, brought about by many factors, but the bottom line is that if you try and just fight one front, you still have to reinforce the other front with as many ships as you would if you were actually engaging that front. Otherwise, the enemy will perceive a lack of strength and capitalize with a counter-offensive ... or worse, demilitarize his own front, moving all his forces to counter the assault of your ally, making the job extremely painful.

In the end, all strategies are situational. With some partners, against some enemies, minimizing force in one theatre to maximize another may be advantageous, but the trick is realizing how many ship hulls "minimizing" actually means.

By John Doucette (Jkd) on Tuesday, April 19, 2005 - 08:56 am: Edit

Well, yes, the devil is always in the details. Interestingly, Mark, what the Hydrans did in your group has been standard Hydran strategy in my group since we started playing back before the Deluxe Edition Sometimes the Hydrans have even managed to take the Lyran captial (and contented themselves with
merely bombarding the capitol from orbit, having seen no need to actual land ships right on the Emperor's palace 😊.

I disagree that one has to reinforce with the same number of ships as if one was going to conduct offensive ops; the purpose of fighting a one front war is not to keep the enemy from attacking the other front, it's to put enough force in the enemy's way that only one main effort at a time has to be undertaken.

Sun Tzu tells us that all of warfare is based on deception. You must make the enemy anticipate incorrectly, and that requires a certain buildup of force. This buildup of force is also useful to support your ally and take advantage of enemy mistakes, just by their very existence.

A Lyran reserve may not reach much of Klingon space, but if it's there, the Hydrans are much more likely to go around those locations. With a full offensive, one only needs one reserve (new construction) on the front, so the other can support your ally with all the ships that aren't attacking anyway. Spare ships flown onto Klingon BATS give the Klingons the sense of security they need to be willing to trade hulls with the Hydrans.

Psychological warfare is often a powerful weapon, and if you can direct your enemy's hand, you have an advantage to capitalize.

The real trick is doing it well.

Sun Tzu ain't always right, either.

Regardless, there's a big difference between putting a reserve on a front and having that front be an active one. The Lyrans can certainly fight a one-front war against the Kzin while leaving a reserve in the south without a large drain on resources.

Fighting a one-front war is risky, though, for reasons already mentioned, and even if it can be pulled off, there's usually only a relatively short window in which a successful one-front war can be fought.

Well, it has been quite a while since I have posted. Looking forward to some discussion about strategy. I will post my ideas in a day or two and see the sharks circle. hehe Looking forward to it. Cheers to all.

James
Is that a sailboat or a shark fin?

No, its an overhead view of the base at Guam...see the two main runways and the water below the island???

Philistines - no appreciation for asciart

Duh folks, isn't it obvious that it is a 2dimensional representation of a tree swaying in the wind?

It's Jesus's legs, walking on water.

Duh.

After seeing the effects of a sucessful expedition, my group has now come to the opinion that the Coalition simply cannot risk letting the Hydrans through to the Feds. In order to prevent that, the Coalition has taken to heavily reinforcing the Hydran border at the expense of operations on the Kzin front. Granted, the Coalition player is still tweaking the mix, but early indications seem to be that the internal strategic logic of the game more or less forces the Coalition into a Hydran first strategy.

The question we're trying to answer now is what are the Hydrans to do? Should they still attempt the expedition, or should they go for the Lyrans? There's even been a proposal that the Hydrans sit and do nothing until and unless the Kzin situation becomes truly desperate. The argument, and it's an enticing one, is that it is far better for the Hydrans to use their free turn of activation to reorganize their forces for defence and build up their fleet without taking the losses they normally would on T3.
This option, the argument further postulates, would present the Coalition with the choice of doing nothing, in which case the Hydrans continue to gain strength, or to attack into the teeth of full-strength Hydran defences before the Hydrans get strong enough to launch an attack of their own. As far as the Alliance is concerned, the suggestion is that as long as the Hydrans are forcing the Coalition to beef up defences facing the Hydran navy, it doesn't matter whether or not the Hydrans are doing any actual fighting; the objective will have been met either way.

On the surface, this sitzkrieg option seems a non-starter, I'm constantly reminded that history has shown that the common sense solution isn't always the best one. Has anyone ever given the sitzkrieg option with the Hydrans a serious try and if so, what was the outcome?

By Jimi LaForm (Laform) on Thursday, April 21, 2005 - 01:52 pm: Edit

If the Coalition is going Hydran first there is absolutely nothing that the Hydrans can do to survive. Just accept the fact that everything that you ever knew and loved will be gone. Your family, your home, your pets and your favorite methane rock garden will be obliterated by the Coalition.

What you can do is to kill the points (if any) that the Coalition offers you. Even if it is just a stray Bats it is victory points. And, whatever you do, do NOT self kill your navy. But also whatever you do, do not just 'give up' the outer SB's. Make the Coalition pay for every inch of ground that they take, without destroying your navy afterwards. Once you are forced offmap (which you will be if they go Hydran first) you must then become the bleeding ulcer that you rightly are.

By Daniel G. Knipfer (Dgknipfer) on Thursday, April 21, 2005 - 05:48 pm: Edit

Sitting is no good. The Lyrans & Klingons out produce the Kzinti & Hydrans by quite a bit. If the Coalition only has to match the Hydran production in the Southwest to maintain the status quo he has that much more to finish off the Kzinti Capital with. Then he can turn his attention on the Hydrans and won't care how much they have built up their fleet. Heck, he may even ignore you and eat the Fed for lunch as he's not paying for repairs generated by an almost endless stream of Hydran fighters. The Mud Slide has become a popular Coalition tactical doctrine.

The Hydran must do damage to the Klingon Fleet. Suck away important variants like SFG ships and Maulers from attacking the Fed. Force repairs that the Coalition can't afford. Tie up picket ships that the Coalition has to use to occupy Hydran space. If they don't the Coalition will win.

By Jimi LaForm (Laform) on Thursday, April 21, 2005 - 05:55 pm: Edit

Oh yes, as the minor alliance races one of the most important things you can do as those races is to continuously kill as many province raiders as you can every single turn. Though you may only kill 4, 5, or 6 every turn, eventually those numbers will be felt not only with the lost provincial income but with the constant
resupplying of those lost garrison ships.

Jimi, I wasn't speaking so much of the strategy the Hydrans should follow if the Coalition is going with a Hydran First strategy as I was about whether the Hydrans should attack or not if the Coalition beefs up its defences to the point that it will all the Hydrans will be able to do to take out one or two BATS.

In that situation, I'm suggesting it might be better for the Hydrans to sit for a while (NOT sit forever) and make the Coalition some to them. The Coalition cannot match Hydran production, as the Hydrans make high-quality ships and the Coalition has to fight the Kzin and they can't out-produce the Alliance everywhere; the Alliance defences are too strong and take out too many ships. But wouldn't it be better for the Alliance for the Hydrans to wait 2-3 turns, assuming the Kzin aren't on the verge of falling because the Coalition has made any Hydran attack not worthwhile, before burning themselves out? Wouldn't even a 1-turn delay be better than attacking on Turn 3 knowing there was little chance of success?

It seems to me that the initiative is too valuable to give up. If the Hydrans don't attack, then the Coalition almost certainly will, at which point you've lost all your forward supply points with little to show for it. That said, I can see an argument for really sitting down: drop to Limited War -- or even Peacetime, although that's probably too limiting -- economy. Essentially, you'd be taking turns of Limited War early in the war to avoid taking turns of full exhaustion late in the war. I'm not certain that that's worth giving up survey dice. Certainly, there'd be an incentive for the Coalition to attack before you bought off a turn of war. I'd be interested to see just what the Hydrans could build at Limited War.

For my money, however, I'd try the run up the Lyran-Klingon neutral zone. There's just too much valuable stuff there: 1013's an important Klingon supply point if he guns for my capital; 0810, 1010, and 1112 are all juicy (even if I'm likely to meet part of the Klink Home Fleet at 1112); and 0809 and 1009 (if I can get ships that far) are probably valuable if the Commercial Covos are in play. Plus I threaten to run the Expedition through Kzinti space (oh, the Klinks can probably stop me, but at least the Klinks are fighting in Klingon space instead of Hydran or Kzinti space). *shrug* All depends on the setup, I suppose.

I'd agree that the 1013 BATS is just too good a target to pass by. It's probably the best use of the FSP+ ... which realistically is going to die in a loud, grotesque military manner on Alliance 3.

There is nothing the Klingons can do to stop it, either. The Hydrans have too many fighters to be pinned out, they have better density, and so WILL win an approach battle, and can easily generate enough points to maul that BATS to splinters in one hit.
With that down, the door is open for a run up the pipe, an expedition into Klingon space, or a fall-back to defend Hydran space. That BATS and the 1214 BATS are the only Klingon supply points that can reach the Hydran Capitol. Unless the Coalition is really thinning its forces in the north, it can't guard both against the Hydran Expedition. A Lyran reserve from 0810 could get there to help, but if the Hydrans focus on only two BATS with their first explosion, they're both going down. The FSP+ guarantees one, the FCR guarantees the other. Yes, 5.4EP is a bit pricy for 27 damage points, but the Klingons can't really afford the repair bills either. Every penny going into fleet repair isn't going into their toybox.

So, after that first salvo, even if you never sortie out of Hydran space again, the Klingons will have to do something to get supply to the Hydran capitol at that point, and no matter what they do (Tug, Convoy or MB), it's a resource they don't have for other purposes, and one they have to defend.

Yes, the Coalition is stronger than the alliance in the beginning, but not infinitely so. They have their limitations, and you just have to put pressure on them until the strings stretch tight. Yes, that's a costly proposition, and many of your men will die to ensure victory, but these are the wages of warfare.

It is a mistake to give in to fatalism ... it may in fact be inevitable that your capitol falls, and your empire is reduced to ash, but you shouldn't dwell on that. Always consider how to make it last a bit longer, how to hold out one more round, how to make it a bit more expensive to take. Dropping damage onto the Klingon fleet may seem futile, but if their fleet has to rotate back for repair, it can't attack this turn. If a strong reserve is needed to protect against you, then either forces can't be going north, or forces can't be attacking. Either way, that's time ... either time for you, or for the Kzinti. Every turn is another turn's income, and just as SFB is played one impulse at a time, F&E is played one turn at a time.

The initiative is too powerful to give up, and a fighter race must attempt to burn off all its fighters every single turn. Add that to the fact that BATS are worth victory points, and if you are shoved off-board later, you won't get another chance at these targets ... it's kind of a must-do ... the only question is where.

That corner BATS is probably the key target in Klingon space, and the only reason to ignore it would be if you were going full-bore Lyran hunting. You need to take it to protect your capitol, to run up the pipe or as part of the 5-point push into Klingon space, if you're trying the expedition. (Yes, I know trying for all the BATS on the Klingon front guarantees some will stay standing, but it also guarantees that others will fall.)

By David Slatter (Davidas) On Friday, April 22, 2005 - 04:41 am: Edit

There is a problem about going for the 1013 BATS. If the coalition is pursuing a Hydran first strategy, there will be more Lyran ships at 1013 than there are ship
equivalents in the Hydran fleets that can reach there, and hence the Hydrans will
never get there. This is very do-able without sacrificing the Zin front, especially if
the Zin SB at 0902 is taken out turn 1 or 2.

Hydran tactics are very difficult when faced with such huge numbers of enemy
ships - the Klingons will always commit at least the home, SR, and west fleets,
with possibly a few builds or the TBS to boot. The big problem comes if you are
*so* badly outnumbered such that the coalition can take out your capital AND all
your starbases in the same turn (again, doable without making the Zin front
totally a problem). If you think that is likely to happen, it is better to concentrate
more resources on fewer starbases with at best a skeleton line at the 1st fleet SB.
What you need to engineer is a situation where the coalition has to fight
significant fractions of the Hydran fleet more than once over a SB, rather than
only ever fighting the entire Hydran fleet once on one turn (and then pinning it
out all the time).

The Old colonies link with the capital is also crucial. Put a ship or two in 0119 to
stop them cutting you off easily. While they can reach 0119 with Lyran fast ships,
doing so will allow your Old colonies squadron reserve to mangle a high-value
section of the Lyran fleet.

Remember, the coalition will never voluntarily SIDS any of your SBs - even the
capital one, as you require at least 90 ships at a SB to make it worthwhile for the
enemy to use SIDS. Maximise the number of rounds you can fight over a SB, and
if that means letting one go cheaper initially, fine. If the coalition ever use SIDS,
give yourself a private smirk (unless you had those 90+ ships on a SB).

Whatever you do, don't let him bag the capital and all the SBs in the same turn.

And if ppl understand that and think it's good, I'll write it up.

By Dave Butler (Dcbutler) on Friday, April 22, 2005 - 11:53 am: Edit

As I said, depends on the setup. There's only three offensive places for Coallition
ships to be: the Hydran-Lyran and Hydran-Klingon borders, and Kzinti space.
Given that they've got finite ships, strengthening one of these will weaken
another, so there's a theoretical opening for someone, somewhere.
Regarding the original question, sometimes a couple of BATS is enough to cause
headaches. If you can nail either of the pairs 0212 and 0413 or 1013 and 1214,
then you've forced either the Lyrans or the Klingons to use other resources for
supply and retrograde points. Also, as Mark points out, you've got something of a
moral imperative to get your fighter pilots killed.
Having re-read the rules, I'm not longer certain that the Hydrans are allowed to
declare a Limited War economy on turn 3, so I'll be asking Nick. I've glanced at
what they can build if they're allowed to go LW, and while it isn't everything that
I'd want, they can at least use all their slipways. (They give up PDU and some
conversions; possibly a bad call, but meh.)
What is the point of limited war for them? All you are doing is taking a turn of exhaustion early. All it does is give you 75% when you have 70eps insted of 75% at 25ish EPs, If you can get 3 turns of limited war it might be worth it but that seems very unlikley.

How many people would like to go to full war economy with the Feds a turn or two early? Early econ is much better than late econ. A ship built on turn 1 is up to 70 times more useful than a ship built on turn 35. You can pin or threaten to pin with it twice a turn. If built on turn 35 (last turn assumption) it will probably only be used once.

Use your econ early! Saving it is delaying your utility. Saving for a specific purpose (I want to build a SB next turn - or I expect to cripple 50 ships in my assault on the Kzin capital), is reasonable, but keeping a bankroll in case you might need it later seems foolish to me. Overbuilding should be avoided unless you are sure you will have extra cash for the forseeable future. An overbuild on turn 1 is probably more useful than a regular build on turn 14 though IMO.

As I pointed out, it's one less turn of total (50%) exhaustion. It's all in how you count things; due to survey ships, later turns' economies are worth more than earlier ones. So, you -- hypothetically, since I'm not sure the rules support it -- give up 18.50 EP on T3, and are pretty much guaranteed to get back 9.75 EP on T26 (assumptions: close to average survey rolls on 81 dice + 15 (out of 23) PT bonuses; Hydrans have nothing but off-map on T26). All that one needs to do is find sufficient "value" to make up the missing 8.75 EP.
So, things that might possibly make up the "value". Well, since it's likely that the Coallition will be dropping to smaller economies on T16 and you won't, you can push a little bit harder on T15A, trying to increase his repair backlog.
Alternatively, T16 is a Spring turn and having the 7 EP that you'd otherwise have lost to exhaustion might allow you to pay for the PAL or ID that's on the schedule (if you want density), or buy you another couple FF or DW (if you're looking for pin count). I suppose that only spending three turns (instead of 4) at full exhaustion before X-tech comes in has already been counted in the "get more income on T26" bit. The more territory the Hydrans have on T26, the less they need to search for additional "value", natch.
I'm not claiming it's the greatest strategy ever, it's probably a gamble that the Hydrans can somehow control their fate for the next 20 turns. Risky does not imply foolish, however, so if the Hydrans aren't going to attack (per the premise of the original question), then it's only a little riskier to sit back and try and whittle yourself a slight advantage (an extra CVA, or extra repairs) on T16 and T26. It's all part and parcel of trying to control Hydran destiny.
(Now, if 18 ep saves the capital, then things are a lot closer to being balanced than I thought.)

By John Doucette (Jkd) on Friday, April 22, 2005 - 07:16 pm: Edit

All the comments on Hydran strategy really haven't fully addressed my question, though.

Assume the Coalition is not going for a Hydran First strategy but is merely putting enough on the border so as to stop the expedition and make a Hydran attack into Coalition territory more expensive than it is worth.

With that assumption in mind, is it still worth it for the Hydrans to attack on Turn 3? Is gutting their fleet worth removing the two Klingon BATS that threaten the capital?

By Tim Losberg (Krager) on Friday, April 22, 2005 - 08:37 pm: Edit

John, my answer is yes, it is worth it...
First of all, you will not gut your fleet as the Hydrans can easily put up a sufficient line to win the approach and then one shot the Bats, even without the FSP+
Second, waiting gives the Hydrans nothing, they have precious few turns to make a claim for themselves, you have to use them.
Finally, if it is that obvious that the Coalition is not taking a Hydran First path, then they will not have nearly enough ships in the south to both prevent an expedition AND guard all needed targets. Since you can set up the Hydrans at the beginning of Alliance T3, you can organize your forces for the attack you want to make and there is nothing the Coalition can do about it but guess, if he is over guarding the Klingo/Hydran border, strike at the Lyrans, there will probably be fewer ships guarding the EB Starbase.
If he does have sufficient forces in the south, then he is deficient in the North and the Kzinti should be making some noise...

if you just hole up in the cap (and over the SB's) you are playing the enemies game...

By Tim Losberg (Krager) on Friday, April 22, 2005 - 08:48 pm: Edit

Also in answer to the idea of stepping out to Limited War T3, remember, for the Hydrans, T3 is the ONLY turn for a very long time when they will actually get their full economy at 100%!
It simply does not make sense not to collect it now at 100% so you can get 100% if 30 EP's one turn later....

By Frank DeMaris (Kemaris) on Friday, April 22, 2005 - 09:20 pm: Edit

Quote:

make a Hydran attack into Coalition territory more expensive than it is
That may actually be a non-sequitor. Mark made an excellent point about the value of initiative earlier, and the importance of getting full use out of fighter factors. The Hydrans have one opportunity to advantageously set themselves up, pick a target or three, and smear it. That opportunity, by itself, is making it difficult for me to envision a situation in which the Coalition has made it "more expensive than it is worth" for the Hydrans to attack (anywhere) and yet which does not represent a major commitment to the Hydrans First approach. In that case, we may find ourselves ignoring the question because it makes no sense.

The current game I'm playing (as the Alliance) makes a bit of a dog's breakfast out of your assumptions, Frank.

I suppose the issue does depend on what the Hydran objectives are. Are the Hydrans merely trying to take out the 3 BATS in range of the capital, are they trying the expedition, are they trying to take out EB SB and on to Lyranant, or are they just trying to do as much damage in Coalition territory as possible? I grant that it is almost impossible to prevent the Hydrans from getting to the BATS unless there's a hell of a lot facing them.

The situation I encountered was that the Coalition massively reinforced the border. And, yes, that made life much easier for the Kzin, but that's another story.

The thing is, the Coalition player was not intending a Hydran First strategy; he was just trying to prevent the expedition, as we saw from our previous game how dangerous that was. I suppose that the Coalition stumbled into an H-First gambit from a force-allocation point of view, but the way the game has played out thus far, it's obvious that was not what the Coalition wanted.

It seems that people are making the general evaluation that taking out the 3 BATS threatening a direct attack on the capital is worth it, no matter the cost. It might be. Hell, maybe that should be the primary goal and the rest is all gravy. It's possible, even probable, that the situation I encountered was an aberration due to Coalition over-reaction. As incredible as it sounds, the Coalition had enough ships to pin the Hydrans out of the Lyran BATS and one of the Klingon ones, had the Hydrans executed the normal single-turn attack on all three targets, which left the Hydrans in a situation where they could only launch one attack (which they did, taking out the Lyran BATS and using 3/4ths of their fleet).

Perhaps my question arose from a situation which is so rare that it represents one
of those times where doctrine breaks down. In a way, it's the counter argument to Mark's point on initiative. Normally, yes, gaining the initiative is good, but there are times when an enemy can take advantage of such doctrine. In the end, I suppose it all comes down to what loss level one is willing to accept when determining whether an op is worth the cost.

By David Slatter (Davidas) On Saturday, April 23, 2005 - 06:22 pm: Edit

Well, as long as the coalition continue that kind of commitment, the Hydrans are doing their job. I would perhaps try to take out 0413, but not at the expense of a number of Hydran Cruiser hulls.

Make sure your reserves are up to scratch, and then see what you have. While the Coalition are "zin first", this commitment can easily allow them to switch to "Hydran first" if you get overaggressive.

By John Doucette (Jkd) On Saturday, April 23, 2005 - 10:39 pm: Edit

That was my thinking, too, that the primary goal of the Hydrans is to force the Coalition to commit forces against them. It doesn't matter if the Hydrans are fighting or not, as long as they're tying down forces that could be better used elsewhere.

By Daniel G. Knipfer (Dgknipfer) On Sunday, April 24, 2005 - 03:00 am: Edit

John,

It does matter as the damage you do has a cost that is generally greater to the Coalition than to the Hydrans. If you're not doing damage then the Coalition only has to restrain you through turn 6 as he prepares for an invasion of the Federation. Once he invades the Fed the Expedition has no meaning. And if the Klingons have taken minimal damage prior to turn 6 he can throw a nearly unstoppable number of ships at the Fed.

By Mark Ermenc (Mermenc) On Sunday, April 24, 2005 - 04:41 am: Edit

The question of what one should reasonably sacrifice depends entirely on the value of the target. If the coalition is strapped for cash, repair backlogged and denying builds, then any damage you can do is worth a lot.

So, if the value of crippling an enemy hull varies with his economic status, than the harder you push on all fronts of that enemy, the more imperative it becomes to press harder still.

I have seen Hydran cruisers evaporate with monotonous regularity in the game I'm playing now. I've stopped building DGs in favour of RNs, so that WHEN they get directed, I get more minus points from homeless fighters. Has that daunted us? No. Not really.

The enemy WILL damage your fleet. That much is guaranteed. If that hull doesn't go on the line and fire at the enemy, there was no point in building it. You bought
it, so use it. Keep hammering away, and see who gives first. No, you can't take
damage like they can, but if they're constantly directing, you're only loosing one
hull a round, while crippling/killing many. If they drop the damage, remind them
why you use a casual fighter carrier doctrine.

Wars are won in the will, and having the guts to just drop damage round after
round after round becomes a force magnifier as well. No, you're not permanently
removing those hulls. Yes, the long run it might come back and bite you in the
tail. But, they can't attack right now. They've been forced back for repair, and
you're stretching the purse strings tight. That's another round where you get the
money from your empire instead of the enemy, and that's another breath of fresh
methane.

Be alive to worry about the endgame. Every turn you hold on makes it less likely
that they will take your capitol, not more.

The Hydrans are in a fascinating strategic position. They should never attack at
all. (They're like the Romulans in that regard). They're in a terrible position to
launch an offensive, massively outnumbered and the situation gets worse every
season. But, if they don't attack, the Kzinti are dead. Without the Hydran
offensive, there isn't enough pressure on the coalition pocketbook for the two to
survive. The Hydrans have to strike now, or they will die when the coalition is
good and ready later.

They don't have the fleet infrastructure (good scouts, command ships, carriers) to
sustain a war, and need to call on tugs basically immediately to fill the gaps.
Whatever the Coalition mauls is going to hurt.

Now, if the coalition is using an atypical strategy, then you need an atypical
response. One must be flexible, but the ability to set-up however you like after
coalition 3 gives you an opportunity to cry havoc that you just can't pass up. It is
simply too good an idea not to. If the coalition tries to defend seven BATS, they
will succeed in defending none of them. They will defend a few, and you can kill
others on the cheap, and then either threaten an expedition or collapse back to
defend. The attack will cost you next to nothing, as whichever front you do not
attack with can form up reserves with new construction, and everything else can
retrograde back to cover whatever you might want it to cover. Hydran space just
isn't that large.

Frankly, I'm having a hard time trying to picture a setup where the coalition was
putting any substantial pressure on the Kzinti, and still able to pin-out the Hydran
offensive from the target of their choice. Faced with that, as the Hydrans, I think
I'd take a deep breath and hit the other six BATS, then let my enemy try and
decide what to reserve to. Then again, I might just start by driving a battle group
to the BATS for a meaningless one-round neutral-zone battle, then try and stay for the pursuit. If they roll everything off their BATS, try and goad him onto your BATS. Worst case, you loose a BATS, and sneak a force around his now-immobile defence to repay the favour, possibly striking the supply line. A veteraned opponent will not commit so early in the turn, they will simply pin out as they need. Then, you never go back to that, giving too many useful targets for a reserve to go to, and the pinning force ends up having to put two ships up to die, because it doesn't dare face you dozen-to-dozen.

If I was faced with that many ships on my border, I'd have to engage them. I'd need the chance to hit them in open space, where the maulers can only blast my ships apart. My PDU are expensive, you know ... and I'd be busy building all manner of such things, knowing full well they'd see use. Every mauler is a turn less the coalition spends over the guns of my homeworld, and we need every last hellbore shot we can get. With such a concentration of force, you can be certain of the vector of attack, as well, and maneuver defenders to react. See what you can do about keeping him pinned off your capitol while the tugs set up their MBs over it.

But again, as Dave Butler has said several times, it's highly situational. If the coalition is refusing to engage in the north (phony-war) in order to strengthen the south, then the Kzinti will be a force to be reckoned with throughout the game to come. Without their defences, and forced to fight over coalition defences, they won't be doing nearly as much damage, and the coalition will be rich. Thus, fleet damage isn't as exciting, but directing on key ships before they get to the capitol may well be worth it. If they're hammering away in the north, then they're taking damage, and the repair bills are becoming horrific to look at. In that case, even losing dreadnought hulls can be worth it for the priveledge of crippling even more of the enemy fleet. Every ship repaired is a frigate not produced, or a ship not converted, or a crippled ship left to rust unrepaired over the capitol for a turn. Damage the fleet enough, and they won't have enough freshly-repaired reserves to guard their lines with. They'll have to employ repair ships, which only hastens the inevitable.

The key point is that if you are letting the coalition get away without being prepared for a counterattack, you are making a mistake. Force them to react to the threat of an offensive by launching offensives when they make mistakes. Keep them on their toes, and they will eventually grow tired and make mistakes. Once they do, you capitalize on them. In this respect, a war is no different from combat.

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By Kevin Howard (Jarawara) on Sunday, April 24, 2005 - 12:40 pm: Edit

You should write that up as a tactical article to publish. At least a Tac-Note.

By John Doucette (Jkd) on Sunday, April 24, 2005 - 01:18 pm: Edit
All good points and all common sense. I'd hardly say they warrant a Tac Note, but then I drank in military doctrine from an early age, so most of the Tac Notes seem along the lines of 'Well, duh!' to me.

As the Hydrans, I'm never concerned with how many ships I lose, not strategically. I write the Hydrans off right from T3, because, yes, militarily, they have no business attacking but are caught in the old nightmare all soldiers are terrified of; being forced into action at the worst possible moment. The real trick is in recognizing when the time has come to lose the big ones. I've actually stopped building DGs and RNs in my current game because it allows me to build more CW hulls and, as the Hydrans are fighting desperately to keep the supply line open to the capital, I need to squeeze as many hulls as possible out of the shipyard before it goes boom.

I'm well aware that the Kzin, and through them, the Feds, live or die by how well the Hydrans do. It may be that I've gotten spoiled by consistently having the Hydrans last through T10-12 on map that their impending loss of the capital is making me re-evaluate the proper course for the ashcans. I suppose there really was no other possible outcome once the Coalition decided on a positive safety strategy to prevent the expedition.

I have a question, sorry to jump in here not having read every post, but is the current thinking to take the Kzinti capitol, and slowly take the Hydran capital?

I would advocate exactly the opposite. In the best games I have had as the Coalition, the Hydrans died a quick, nasty death and were forced offmap.

The Kzinti capital is harder to fortify, as the Kzinti fleet can pop in from the offmap and disrupt any attempts at building defences you might make. You can see the Hydrans coming from a way off, and should probably be able to pin them out of Hydrax.

My priorities are:

1) Kill Hydran capital
2) Invade the Feds on schedule
3) Kill the Kzinti capital

I have found that the Hydrans can be bottled up with little effort. For a while anyway.

I am currently trying to find out what the long term consequences are of just
reducing the Hydrans to their Homeworld while taking Kzintai and hammering on the Feds.

So far, it seems to work quite well, but I need to get to at least turn 16 with this strategy to see how it works in the middle era.

There are so many different strategies that work (which is what makes the game fun). It is best (and fun) to try different things each game just to see how they work.

Remember that it isn't always about winning but having fun with your buds across the table. Don't forget to trash talk while playing, it adds a ton to the game too =)

On Kzinti homeworld defenses:

What do people usually shoot for in terms of additional defenses built in the first 3-4 turns? I'm curious as to how my build strategy matches up with others.

Thanks

As many PDUs as possible on the homeworld, don't bother on any other planet. With the new base stacking rules, consider putting up the MBs over the side system majors. Without them, put them up over the homeworld.

Possibly put up some PGBs on side system majors, but shipbuilding should come first over this.

As you get Kzintai up to 20 PDUs, this slowly releases your fleet to be more aggressive, as you don't need as much to hold Kzintai.

My usual strategy as the Coalition is not even to attempt to take the Kzinti capitol. However, make a lot of noise and force the Kzinti into spending a bunch of EPs on defense I never plan on assaulting. Taking this hex is almost worthless, to hard to hold. Just go in and devastate everything you can. Repeat as needed. I like to throw everything at the Hydrans, and then go into the Federation some time after turn 7, sometimes even turn 10, depends on how much damage took killing the Hydrans. IMHO the whole game hinges on the Federation capitol. Even if the Coalition can not take the hex, devastating everything pretty much cripples the good guys.

That's the Zin problem. Pump up to 20 PDUs and you "waste" the money if the
coalition do not attack. Don't do it, and the coalition will inevitably have a go sometime, probably trashing your capital.

hmmm. In our games the Kzin homworld always goes to 20 PDU's,and the entire capitol hex is devastated by turn 7 anyway... including the capitol. It's not occupied, because the Coalition can't hold it... but it does get trashed... repeatedly.

Ya know, if you are hard enough on the Kzin before taking their capital from them, I have found you can actually hold on to it for a good run. Now, you can't hold it forever, but eventually even the Hydrans will take back their capital.

I like to build 16 PDU's on Kzintai, and only build the remaining 4 pdu's if the Coalition is clearly coming after the capital. The Coalition would need to have almost double my ships to force me to build the last 4. After I have 16 pdu's - If I can pay for an odd pdu, while building all of my ships, I will do it.

The Kzin need to have that fixed defense to hide behind, they also need to build as many ships as possible to be able to push the action and force the Coalition to leave ships on the Kzin front. Much like the Hydrans the Kzin must be a bleeding ulcer that can not be exterminated, that requires a constant influx of ships. If these ships are needed on the Kzin front the Kzin can play turtle (hiding under the capitals PDU's on their defense turn) when they are outclassed. If they are not the Kzin must be able to make the Coalition pay for not leaving enough ships on the front. Either way the Kzin should try to trade fighters for ships on every turn.

I take a more agressive stanse with the Kzinti... if the coalition wants to take the cap, they will take it and in the longrun the PDU's will have only a marginal affect (this affect actually increases as time goes on and there are more combat zones to account for)

In the early turns, I build as much as possible, if things lok like an early cap assult, I go for high pin count, concentrare on my light ships, but if the coalition is looking to contain the Kzintis the I go for combat power, build your carriers and FCR's. What is left I will spend on PGB's going to PDU's only if there is extra, once up to about 16, if I'll slowly start to add fighter modules to the PGB's if possible.

I actually follow the note in the rules and allocate a portion of the Kzin econ to static defences. I always try to get a second SB up in over the capital (but leave
the capitol alone, as the Patriarch already has his bunker) and ramp the capital up to 20 PDUs. I find it's best to assume that the Coalition will attempt to take the capital, and act accordingly, because the Kzin do not have the time to wait and see. Also, in the first turn or two, their production schedule can't match their economy, so why not spend the extra points on fixed defences? If the Coalition doesn't want the SB appearing, then they're going to have to burn in and fight a round over the heart of the Kzin defences, assuming they can get past the Kzin navy (and if the Coalition was bled sufficiently taking out Duke and/or Count SB, the Kzin just might be able to effectively pin them out).

The day the Kzin outpin the Coalition on T2 or T3 is the day that coalition player has been smoked beyond redemption.

Thanks for all the feedback so far. Now to take the discussion in a slightly different direction:

When and where (if ever) do you deploy new/additional bases (MB, BATS, or SB) for the Kzin? I used to always aim for a 2nd SB over the HW, but with the double-SB ruling made some time back, I'm not sure that its worth the investment any more. I also have trouble seeing how a MB or BATS at any other location has any use at all, at least until late in the game when the tide starts to turn.

Thanks.

I find the thought of the Kzinti ever getting the SB upgrade over Kzintai to be just amazing. The Coalition can so easily get into the hex with a simple SE majority and one shot the bats while its upgrading to a SB with a mauler for only 26 damage, something the Coalition should be able to generate without much effort.

Myself though, when I play the Kzinti, I typically start up a second SB over the Marquis zone and put MB's over Kzintai for a little extra compot and EW.

I usually try and get a BATS up over the HW, just to threaten a SB upgrade if the Coalition doesn't keep the ship count up (i.e Hydra First).

It only costs as much as one PDU to get a BATS(0) up, and its worth it if the Coalition wants to try and come stop a MB->BATS upgrade, under the guns of a SB, 12+ PDUs, and the Kzinti Fleet....

[Edit: Well, the discussion has moved on slightly, but fortunately in my direction. Now I feel better as this is only a slight hijacking.]
I have a related specific situation but it seems like a good springboard into a more general discussion. A group of us are playing Backdraft and I'm the Kzinti. Because the Alliance gets T0 to execute their dastardly plots against the innocent Coalition*, I've managed to put a SB(0) around Kzintai (but only, I should stress, because we were playing this scenario). Currently, Kzintai has SB, SB(0), 16xPDU. My question is whether it is wise to go ahead and add the four fighter modules to the SB(0). It would cost 16 EP. The thing is, if the Coalition comes in it would be my very first time playing a dual SB situation (let alone with the new rules).

With the new rules, the Coalition can come in and hit Kzintai and will face SB (48/1EW) + SB(0) (18/0EW or 9/3EW) + 16xPDU (144/4EW) = 210/5EW or 201/8EW extra. In this case, adding in the fighter modules is a waste of money because the fighters will count against either my attrition limit (stupid carrier groups) or my command limits. The other alternative is to attack the SB(0) directly. In this case the Coalition will face SB(0) (36/1EW) + SB (18/0EW or 9/3EW) + 16xPDU (96/0EW) because the PDUs contribute their fighter squadrons, but not themselves (so assuming no EW effects) = 150/1EW or 141/4EW. Unfortunately in this situation, the fighters off of the original SB can't base off of the SB(0) so they are limited by the attrition/command restrictions.

Now, the Coalition could come in and fight me at the SB(0) and face 60 less ComPot, but the problem is then that they have no way of reducing any of the extra ComPot I have (short of killing the SB). I take some damage on my fleet, he takes a bunch of damage on his fleet (about 2.5 times more on average) and I should (if the gods are kind) outlast him. He could come against the planet to kill the PDUs and in this case, fighters on the SB(0) would be worthless. Now, if I were the Coalition (gods I don't know why I'm saying this) if I were to ever assault Kzintai, I would come in and kill the PDUs on one turn, and then come in and fight (probably on another turn) at the SB(0) to avoid the extra ComPot from the SB(12)'s fighters.

In this case, would it ever be wise to put the four fighter modules (16 EP) on the SB(0)? Would it be worth it if my attack plan was followed (Turn N - Kill PDUs, Turn N+1 - Drive Kzinti fleet off of Kzintai) to buy fighter modules after the PDUs were gone but before the big fight hit (between turns N and N+1)? This ties in nicely with the question of how many PDUs should one buy: if you build Fortress Kzintai, the Coalition will probably never attack it (and you waste your money), but you don't want to have your defenses be not strong enough to inflict serious damage on the Coalition. I wonder if a relevant number is the number of rounds 16 EP would pay for drone bombardment (13) since both would add 12 ComPot to the defense. In this case, if you expect that the SB(0) battle would last longer than 13 rounds, you buy the fighter modules, shorter, you just consider paying for drone bombardment. I don't know. Thoughts?
* Golden Rule of the West: Do unto others before they others do it unto you.

By Jimi LaForm (Laform) on Tuesday, April 26, 2005 - 05:32 pm: Edit

Myself, if I had the extra EP’s after building what I needed for my navy, I would build the extra fighter waves. You don't have to use them in the fight at the other SB, but if he chooses the SB(0) you'll wish you had them.

By Robert Padilla (Zargan) on Tuesday, April 26, 2005 - 09:01 pm: Edit

Personaly I am not even sure that putting up any MBs over any capital is worth it, as they just don't do much with the new base rule. Espically for the Hydrans, who I think even before that ruling, are better off saving the MBs, or at least one of them, so they can re-build their bases once the Coalition has to start sending ships away to fight the Feds. This is espically important if the Coalition plays the game of not taking the Hydran capital, as the Hydrans can then extend their reach to either threaten deeper into Lyran space, or to the Klingon south.

By Daniel G. Knipfer (Dgknipfer) on Tuesday, April 26, 2005 - 10:15 pm: Edit

Advice From the Enemy.

Just surrender Dale. It's easier that way.

By Dale Lloyd Fields (Dylkha) on Wednesday, April 27, 2005 - 12:43 am: Edit

Dan

Well, you know, surrendering the capital (abandonment) would bring in the Feds on T7 (Backdraft rules).

Reading over the abandonment rules: Hmm...and I would get to keep the dual SBs as (511.62) only devastes and destroys PDUs...

By Ben Tilford (Hobbit) on Wednesday, April 27, 2005 - 02:13 am: Edit

One thing that keeps popping up in these discussions is the concept that if you over-fortify Kzintai and the it is never attacked, that the EP are "wasted". I don't buy this at all. If the Kzin retain possession of the undevastated HW and aren't in a position of needing to recapture it or bring down the Coalition bases being built there every turn or two, they have a lot more flexibility to run an effective counter-offensive. Furthermore, the capital is actually within 6 hexes of coalition hard targets (well, BATS, anyways) where the off-map area is not.

Now to get a receipt for those 2 cents...

By Daniel G. Knipfer (Dgknipfer) on Wednesday, April 27, 2005 - 05:52 am: Edit

Dale,
Only if it's captured. If we don't move in and occupy it the Fed doesn't activate and all the players look at you like there's something wrong with you.!

BTW, in order to abandon a capital you have to move all your units out (except the PDUs that are automatically destroyed. Since you can't move a SB tecnically you can't abandon the capital while one is still there.

I'd up the PDUs first before putting fighters on the SB(0). After all, 2PDUs cost less than the SB fighters, and their fighters can participate in attacks against either SB.

But with such strong defences already, it's highly debateable that any further forticication is necessary.

What truly astounds me is the attitude of some people who seem to think that this is some sort of chess game, or math formula with counters. The assumptions are all variants on a theme and boil down to a statement implying that good or bad play have no effect on the game. If nothing players can do can have any impact, why play the game?

The thought the the Coalition, for example, can always prevent the Kzin from getting a second SB over the capital is just as amazing to me as it is to those that cannot see how the Coalition could fail.

John, player skill does come into effect, and luck is always a factor that has done in many a close battle.

However, when a thing happens 9 out of 10 times, it tends to become a staple by which the game is played and opinions are based off of.

John, it is a matter of SE's in the early war between the Coalition and the Alliance. Simply put the Coalition simply outships the Kzinti's by a nearly 2.2-1 ratio. How is it possible for the Kzinti to pin out the Coalition from killing a Bats being converted to a SB? I've played both sides of the war many many times. Never, ever have I seen the early war Kzinti's being able to pin out the Coalition... even when the Coalition goes Hydran first.

I've added up the starting fleets + T1 builds for the coalition (i'm not even adding the Klingon TBS nor T2 builds nor the Lyran Far Stars nor T2 builds here) vs the starting fleet for the Kzinti plus T1-T3 new builds.

Coalition 177 ships, not including fighters vs Kzinti 132 ships not including fighters. Bear in mind that 132 is if the Kzinti are able to build their full schedule
all 3 turns... so even without the TBS, Far Stars and T2 or T3 builds the Coalition outships the Kzinti by 45 ships.

Dgknipfer,
I suggest that you re-read (511.6); there's no requirement to move anything out of the capital in order to abandon it. (Also note that the reference was to Backdraft, which handles the Feds slightly differently.)

Actually the new Multi base rules make setting up a second base over the Cap (any Cap) much easier as the defender can select the base being set up as the excluded base

Quote:

302.2123) In the event that two or more bases of any type or types (system bases, mobile bases, operational bases, base stations, battle stations, sector bases, starbases, star fortresses) are at the same ÒlocationÓ, none of them count against the command limits. The attacker may use the standard combat system or he may (each Combat Round) elect to use the special rules below.

A: The Defender may, but does not have to, designate one base as ÒexcludedÓ. This cannot be the base with the planet. This Òexcluded baseÓ cannot then use any of its combat, EW, fighter, or PF factors in the battle. The Defender may, after any combat round, drop this exclusion, but he cannot change it to another base. Once all other bases in the location are destroyed, these rules will not apply and the excluded base will then be in the battle.

Unless this is a full fledged Assault this should protect the base from raids with the intent of disrupting the upgrade.

Chris, it hasn't happened in my games that way 9 times out of 10.

I think this just boils down to style. It seems most folks play with a bit of a metagaming style, and, I suppose that does explain the conventional wisdom, wisdom my group has been hard-pressed to understand. Our style is different, it seems, and it's not the tactics, I think, but in the fact that we don't play the system. The proposal to not replace those early carrier escorts, for example, was met with a resounding corus of 'can we get what they're smoking?'. Other, similar,
discussions revolving around hulls and SEs elicited similar reactions, as we could not conceive how playing the game as an exercise in mathematics could be any fun.

In my current game, I managed to pin the Coalition out of the Kzin capital while my second SB was going up. One thing that seems to be missing is that it doesn't matter how many SEs the two have based on starting fleets and builds, because that ignores combat losses, for one.

I'm not saying it's always possible, but neither do I buy the argument that getting a second SB is always impossible, either. Too much depends on the situation at the time for any definitive answer.

It could also be that, after so long paying the game, that we've all settled into predictable patterns dictated by our opponents, too. I play the way I play in large measure due to the way my opponent plays; our method is closer to reality (though whether that reality is based on modern military concepts, or those of WWII or even earlier is up for debate), with fog of war and human elements as part of the equation as opposed to the more omniscient, almost chess-like method that seems to be prevalent in the majority of the community.

I would dearly love to pit one style against another. I'm certain I'd have my head handed to me more than once, and I'm also fairly sure the reverse would prove true 😊

EDIT: I should also mention that this is played without the new base rule. We looked at it, found it worse than the problem, and have disregarded it.

By Jimi LaForm (Laform) on Wednesday, April 27, 2005 - 01:14 pm: Edit

I had forgotten the new base rules as I've not played with them yet, so yes, with those new rules it is easy to upgrade the bats to SB since you can just exclude the secondary base as a target.

John, having played with quite a few different F&E groups no one playstyle will work. That is why each and every game I try some totally new strategy, just to see what happens.

By Nick G. Blank (Nickgb) on Wednesday, April 27, 2005 - 01:30 pm: Edit

Remember too that the new base rules are an option for the attacker when he attacks, the attacker can choose to use the new rule (and take less damage but allow the defender to "exclude" a base, possibly the one being built/upgraded), or he can use the standard rule, going in under the full guns of all bases, but get to directly target the base being added.
I was unaware the new rule allowed the attacker to just gun in using the old ruling... nm then, I just don't see it being possible that the Kzinti can build the dual SB unless the Coalition just let's them do so.

[Edit: Nick beat me to it. But the rule is (302.2123) so there...]

I do want to add that I have to agree with Jimi on this in that the Kzinti normally just can't get a 2nd SB up. The only reason I was able to do so was because of two factors:

1) Backdraft allowed me to start laying it a turn early (T0 for MB placement).

2) Enough Coalition ships went south that the critical turn allowed me to be able to pin him out.

For illustration in our Backdraft game (from memory so feel free to correct me):

T0A - Start laying MB. L-RC RESV saves EB SB.
T1C - HW and remnants of RC face buffed Counts.
T1A - MB->BATS(0). Strong attack by Hydran. More low-level opportunistic by Kzinti. All but one RESV drawn south. 1/3 of K-NR goes south?
T2C - K and L heavily garrison EB SB so it can be repaired to safe levels. L defensive in ZTO, K equal in ZTO SE, but much weaker in ComPot.
T2A - BATS(0)->SB(0). Kzinti focus attack on NR SB to draw RESVs to a place where they can't reach Kzintai (K would have lost NR SB if they didn't RESV there).
T3C - Simply not enough Coalition SE in range of Kzintai to stop upgrade.

To comment further on the two points earlier, if I had been forced to start laying the MB on T1, the Coalition could stop the BATS(0)->SB(0) on T4C if they wanted to. Also, the Hydrans came up T0A and made a very serious attack on the EB SB. If the RC RESV didn't go down there, it would have fallen (look at the at-start forces for the EB. Very weak). The Hydrans also started overbuilding RN like a man on crack and was just kicking teeth in down south. The Coalition had to scramble immediately if they wanted to have an offensive down there. So if either of these two conditions were not met, the Kzinti wouldn't have a 2nd SB in this particular game. I don't want to denigrate my own (obviously superior strategic and tactical) abilities 😊, but I would not be the one calling the shots. The superior SE of the Coalition gives them the choice of whether a 2nd SB goes up.

I have to agree with Dale, whether or not the the Kzinti can get the 2nd SB over the Cap really depends on what the Coalition does, they have little control over the situation.
No, I agree with Dale and Tim. The early war Alliance is entirely at the Coalition's beck and call. They can only do what the Coalition allows them to do.

only what the coalition allows them to do is a little misleading. The alliance does dance to the coalitions tune to be sure, but they certainly can exploit coalition blunders and that I am sure is not what the Coalition allows them to do...

It is the early war alliances job to take advantage of everything that the Coalition cannot do. The Coalition outnumbers the Alliance, but the Coalition is not omnipotent, they can only defend and attack so many points at one time.

At risk of agreeing with Chris Fant (;^)), if the Coalition does not want the Kzintis to add bases to Kzintai, the Coalition can stop them at will through Turn 6. Are there possible situations where this would not be true? Sure, but they involve bad tactics on the part of the Coalition. John, I encourage you to explain how you stop it prior to Turn 7.

The Kzinti are a very dangerous opponent in the right hands and if the Coalition gives an opening. I have caused major harm and danced away from trouble with the Kzin often.

I am not trying to say that the Kzin are unable to sometimes to this, or that or the other thing, but they are only able to exploit opening given to them by the Coalition, they really cannot create openings for themselves.

Concure, you sleep around the Kzinti you wind up bleeding for it....

Also, I'm not saying that the Coalition cannot win and that the war is a foregone conclusion in any way at all. I think both sides can beat the other. A lot of it comes down to out maneuvering, out thinking, and out dierolling your opponent. The early war Alliance just has to take the points that the Coalition 'gives' them, not overcripple nor overkill their fleet either while on the offensive or defensive. Always bear in mind that if the Coalition wants to do something, they can while in the early war... and even into the mid war. By late midwar or late war things should be much different and the roles are reversed.
Copy and paste Chris Fant's last post for my opinion (expressed much more succinctly than I could).

By Christopher E. Fant (Cfant) on Wednesday, April 27, 2005 - 09:48 pm: Edit

Wow, the apocalypse is coming, 2 agreements with me in the same day.

By Daniel G. Knipfer (Dgknipfer) on Wednesday, April 27, 2005 - 10:05 pm: Edit

REALLY!?!? You don't have to abandon your Capital to abandon your Capital. That's odd, but I've never had to abandon a Cap as the Alliance so I hadn't looked that close at the abandonment rule.

By Mark Ermenc (Mermenc) on Thursday, April 28, 2005 - 07:20 am: Edit

Another consideration in the grander scheme of the "can he stop the 2SB?" is the cost to the coalition of doing so.

Take the Kzinti deployment I used in the opening of my current game as an example: Turn one, I build 4 PDU on the capitol and started setting up both MBs there as well ... welded them right on to the capitol SB.

Could the Coalition have stopped the constructions on C2? Yeah, probably, but the cost would have been hideous. I left a good fleet there (On reserve, but still) and the COMPOT of the defences would have ravaged what forces could have reached. Plus, pulling ships off the BATS/SB assaults would have meant more of them still standing to be thorns for later turns. They instead went the slow and steady way. I didn't mind having them, but I wouldn't have minded losing them either; they were free.

A2 comes up, and the tugs immediately begin upgrading both MBs to BATS(0)s. More PDU are erected. Could the coalition have stopped it on C3? Yeah, probably, but there were still starbases to drop, planets to ravage and other, "more important" things to do. I wouldn't have minded losing them for the chance to bring the capitol's guns to bear and blunt future assaults, since I hadn't really spent all that much on them at this point.

If you keep this sort of thing up, by the time the situation looks good enough for you to drop the 28 into a BATS(0):SB(0), the coalition is left wondering if it's really worth attacking. They'd have to face around 300 COMPOT, after facing approach battles. They're left wondering if they're playing into my hand.

Remember: when you spend that much on defences, and the defences never fire, you're not getting good value from them. Even if you loose the SB upgrade, you've directed the time and place of the coalition offensive, and dropped around 100 damage onto their line, guarenteeing an unpleasant repair bill. The BATS may go down, but that means the PDU get to live to fire one more time than you ever thought they would. Maybe it's not worth the 30ish EP(depending how you like to count these things), but then again, maybe it is.
There's an up side to everything.

By Andy Palmer (Andypalmer) on Thursday, April 28, 2005 - 08:32 am: Edit

One thing I suspect - if the Coalition stops the 2SB, they aren't doing a whole lot else on that front.

By Robert Padilla (Zargan) on Thursday, April 28, 2005 - 09:06 am: Edit

I dunno, I can see going for the MB to BATS conversion, it's not that much and on AT2, the Kzinti can probably even afford it. But what are they giving up for doing a BATS to SB? Not only is that 28 EPs, but how many ships are not getting built? And do we really think the Zin can afford that base and 4xPDU's in a turn? That's 56 EPs, not really leaving anything for shipbuilding on AT3 or later. So unless that one round under the capitals guns can do at least 56 EPs of damage, it does not seem like it would be an even trade to me. Even then, since the Zin probably did not build any ships that turn, the first few dead Coalition ships can be offset by the Zin ships not built, making it even more worthwhile for the Coalition to go in and waste the upgrade.

By Mark Ermenc (Mermenc) on Thursday, April 28, 2005 - 10:10 am: Edit

Yes, the Kzinti can afford the starbase. Rather easily, in fact. The above construction was including a BATS:SB conversion on turn one (1805, before the infamous re-zoning legislation) ... so you simply bank that 28EP for a few turns, no sweat. Where this tactic actually hurts is in not having your tugs in service, especially if you're using TGCs (in case they have to go on the line).

By Jimi LaForm (Laform) on Thursday, April 28, 2005 - 10:50 am: Edit

I would gladly exchange a 100 damage round to kill a Bats to SB upgrade from the Kzinti which by T3 should only be bankrolling around 70ish EP's. If they are upgrading 2 Bats(0) to 2 SB (0) I'll do the 3 approach rounds plus 2 rounds of combat over the capital to kill the 2 upgrades, willingly take the 200 points of damage and cost you 56 extremely important EP's for about 15EP's of repairs. Income is something the early war Coalition has and the early war Alliance just does not. It is true that the Coalition will be doing very little else in the north for that turn to accomplish this task, but then again, it's worth it in my eyes.

By Mark Ermenc (Mermenc) on Thursday, April 28, 2005 - 12:11 pm: Edit

It sounds like you would be a very interesting person to face across the F&E board, Jimi, because there are several times when I most certainly would gladly pay 28 EP and a couple hulls to do 170 or more damage to the coalition navy in a time and place of my choosing, when I can be so certain of their target for DD that I can put an unescorted LAV on the line for density. The damage guarantees that either they trim down their ship count, or they are blunting the spear, forcing their ships to spend time cycling back to seek repair instead of shooting me.

Every round I keep the coalition navy over the hot embers of my capitol's PDUs makes it less likely they'll take my capitol, because of the weakening of their fleet ... even if it's only a temporary weakening, as you suggest.
As the Kzinti, my goal ... almost my only goal ... is to have my capitol intact until the Federation can send big, happy blue ships to help me out. I don't have to hold out forever, just long enough ... and throwing the kitchen sink at the coalition this way will do that for me. Once. That leaves me looking for three more tricks to come up with to survive C4, C5, C6.

F&E is played one turn at a time, and nothing ... NOTHING ... comes for free.

My goal is not to crush the coalition singlehandedly here ... let's be realistic ... my goal is to make my enemy say "I can not afford many more such victories."

It is true that, as the Alliance, especially as the minor races, when you force the Coalition to do something they might not want to do, that it is a 'victory' for the Alliance. So you won't get any argument from me in that respect. It isn't the minor races job to 'beat' the Coalition, but it is their job to make the Coalition bleed profusely when they can.

In fact that is why I play this game because their is no one way to win. Each and every game is different, which is why I (and probably all of us) play this game.

So the method to ensure the extra bases get built is... turtle on the capital and hope that the rest of your empire distracts your opponent for a couple of turns? This is the pin argument, and it doesn't work, since you don't have enough ships. Paying to convert two MBs to BATS(0) in the face of that kind of SE superiority isn't wise, unless you are trying to lure the Coalition in there. Particularly now, when the attacker can invoke the multiple base rule and torch one very easily.

Indeed, and the tricky thing is that the "best way to win" depends as much (or more) on what the enemy is doing than on what you are trying to do.

Our group has a running joke that we let our enemies decide what we should build; "Oh, he's blown the tar out of that scout. It must have been a good ship, I better build more!" or "Hey, how come you never shoot my G-ships anymore ... I want to build more of them, but you never shoot them! I keep having to build these darn scouts, because that's all you ever shoot!"

It's kind of pointless to talk about the Kzin SB issue in one way, and others have alreayd made the point.

Everything depends on the situational aspects involved in the specific game under consideration.
Mark actually made part of my argument for the Kzin being able to get the second SB up. In fact, that was the primary reason I was able to in my current game, I suspect.

Alright - this last topic seems to have run out of steam, so on to the next one.

I've seen many discussions on coaltion options for focusing on either the Hydrans or Kzintis early on, and the pros and cons of such a strategy. What I have seen much less of is discussion of the alliance options for similar strategies.

As an example, in my last game as the alliance, I put a lot of energy into limiting the Lyran offensive options. I sacrificed some Kzin hulls to pop the BATS they were trying to build in my space, and did the same against an FRD that got too close. On the Hydran front, my opponents (new to the game) failed to adequately reinforce the Hydran front prior to T3, so I used the entire Hydran navy to pop the EB SB and border BATS, willingly sacrificing the Klingon border bases on the following coalition turn.

My theory was that if I could deny the Lyrans forward deployment points, then the Klingons would be forced to take the primary offensive role on both fronts, as well as help pay for any Lyran repairs that they didn't want to field-repair.

Now obviously this was dictated in large part by the opportunities they gave me, but I think if they had denied me good Lyran targets I would have simply switched tacks, and made the Klingon empire my enemy of choice to overload.

So, as alliance, do people generally just take the best target available in a given round, or try for a systematic overload of one of our foes?

Thanks for all the responses to my previous questions.

Now we get to the tough questions... what to do with the early war Alliance.

In my eyes, the only thing you can truly accomplish as the Alliance, short of suicide of their navies/homeworlds, is to take what the Coalition gives you. In the example above the Lyrans gave you their southern bases so you took them.

The early war Coalition has control of the game, but, despite their superiority in ship counts they have their limits. It is the Alliances job to take what they can without over-crippling their navy. If they keep their navy as healthy as possible it really makes the Coalition think twice when it comes to the meat of the war which
is the grab of Federation space. If the Kzin's/Hyrans have hurt their navy too much they cannot keep the pressure up, and if their is little pressure in those two theatres the Feds will implode.

Do not destroy your navy (especially the Hydrans) to defend anything... even your homeworld, you have to keep your navy up to force the Coalition to defend your space heavily. Always max your builds up, even if it is just frigates.

Jimi pretty much nailed it. The Alliance has to be carefully agressive in the early going, taking what they can grab. Basically, they need to follow a policy of tiptoe, sneak, and infiltrate. Once the Hydrans get into the war, though, the Alliance does have an opportunity to begin punishing one Coalition partner at a time. Maybe not heavily, but it's something to consider. Lyrans just took heavy casualties in a battle against the Kzin? Have the Hydrans hit them, preferrably over a target the Lyrans need to defend. Done carefully, the Alliance player can overload one of the Coalition repair grids, or at least cause it to run to near capacity and that might be all you need to buy an extra turn or two.

There may be times, however, when an attack into the teeth of Coalition forces is required. For example, and this is one of rare occasions I can see justifying this, the other being trying to keep the supply line open to the Hydran capital, if a large concentration of SAFs makes an appearance, seriously consider trying to destroy or whittle their numbers down. I launched a successful attack as the Kzin in my current game on 3 Klingon SAFs. The battle ended up involving most of the Coalition force in Kzin space and casualties were heavy, but all 3 SAFs were destroyed and that bought me time, as the Coalition needed those SAFs to begin the reduction of Kzintai. I did burn off about a third of my fleet, but his casualties were as bad and the result was an effective end to Coalition offensive operations in Kzin space for a turn. Be careful, though, because such counter-attacks can easily backfire.

There are two and only two ways for certain victory:-

1) at the end of the game have earnt more VP's than the opponent.

2) seize and hold 3 (or 2 for the Alliance) capitals.

One of the great things about this game, as Jimi touched upon is that no 2 games are the same. Pinning, ship counts have their part - but it is all geared towards one of the two above conditions.

Is losing say 100 ships worth stopping the 2nd SB?
In many situations no.
If Kzintai would be the 3rd capital then yes. Others a resounding maybe.
The Alliance is certainly on the strategic defensive initially, but have to be cautiously aggressive to:

1) disrupt the coalition plans
2) disrupt the economy
3) reduce ship count - either by killing or so overloading the repair capacity that the ships sit around next to useless.
4) destroy any key target of oppurtunity. This by definition varies so much from situation to situation.

In a very heavy Hyrdan First strategy - how many ships is destroying the NR Starbase worth ?
A question I faced in game - in reality to destroy that SB would have gutted the Kzinti navy, and likely led to the fall of Kzintai - ie not worth it.
Having said said I still wish now I had tried it, even it did costs the game it would have been a heck of a point to brag about at Origins 2006.

The Hydrans are big swinging punchers - they can hurt you with one blow.

The Kzinti are classical boxers - they dance around trying to outpoint you, but led your guard down and they can put you on your backside struggling against the count to get up.

Another thing to consider doing as the Alliance (mind you I have never done this myself, but I've seen it done extremely successfully by other Alliance players), is to pick one or two ship types and DD them to oblivion every single time they are on the line. This costs you a lot of valuable damage, but, with enough time and loss of ships it can really throw the Coalition into a major loop. Choose DN's, maulers, scouts or whatever. Be persistent if you decide this, but, do not choose more then 2 different types of ship types as then you will lose too much damage potential.

Another variant on that is to choose different damage strategies for the two early Alliance partners. As the Hydrans, I almost always kill every single mauler I see, without question, unless doing so would endanger a mission. As the Kzin, I concentrate on carrier escorts.

I have never considered trying to DD the Coalition escorts away. Myself I typically choose maulers and scouts as my two. I've also seen other players choose Lyran DN's to prevent the huge buildup over time of those heavy ships.
The initial Hydran Turn 3 tactics are a different animal than the overall initial Alliance strategy, because the Hydrans get to setup everything at once and have relative initial flexibility as a result. In addition, their actions can dictate the next turn or two of activity (by bringing forward Klingon reserves or not, for example).

In general, the Hydrans should do what they can to the Lyrans, and think long and hard about attacking the Klingons (as it advances ships otherwise stuck in place). Popping at least the border Lyran BATS can delay and obstruct the Lyrans somewhat (as has been discussed elsewhere as nauseum), so that is good, but the Lyrans might have too much there (difficult for the Lyrans to save all three border bases, but possible). In this case the Hydrans might simply create huge reserves and wait.

I usually concentrate on Klingon ships when I can as the Alliance, because the Klingons have the least supply problems to begin with. This forces the use of more Lyrans, which involves difficult (and disruptable) supply paths. As a bonus, Klingons are often available for kills as frigates get used for garrisons. Against pure Lyran battleforces it is all good of course, because they have so few fighters, so dropping damage with the hope of kills in pursuit works well. Against mixed battleforces or Klingon battleforces (where I usually see many Klingon fighters), you have to direct anyway, so it doesn't matter.

Having said all that, I think the kill Lyrans to "spread the Klingons out" strategy has merit. Certainly the Lyrans have a lesser ability to replace losses. Of course, if you direct too much the Lyrans have a cheap overbuilt frigate they can afford due to a lack of a repair bill...

Richard, I think you could have done it. It would have been a real killer to their strategy to have no bases north of 1811 and east of 1209.

Yes, my Hydran's got creamed, but I caused enough damage to limit the Klingon construction over a year while they licked their wounds in preparation to attack the Federation.

Tactics and strategy are different animals, however. Related, but different. Strategy guides tactics, but without the correct tactics, even the most brilliant strategy will fail.

As the Kzin, the reason I DD the escorts is purely situational; my opponent uses his carriers as ultra-heavy attrition squadrons, so the sooner I force them off the line, the better.
The Hydran decision whom to attack on T3 is, I think, better based on threat level than it is on ease of accomplishment. Sometimes that means taking out the Lyran BATS, other times the Klingon.

How many people wait until turn 10 to attack the Federation?

We used to, or wait until T9, then have the Roms hit on T10, but when that happened, as the Fed player, I was overjoyed, as it gave me three full turns to build reinforce and whatnot without suffering combat losses. I think it's better to attack the Feds on T7, regardless of the force available. Even if the Klingons don't have anything much more than East Fleet and some stuff, the Fed fleets are anemic and have to face a situation where they cannot, in the opening stage, defend even a majority of the targets being hit, so the Klingons will make progress.

Everything then depends on the Roms. If the Klingons go in weak and haven't done much more than get past the border, a good case could be made for having the Roms send everything, including the kitchen sink, north against the Gorns. An equally good case could be made for sending the Roms against the Feds in such a situation as well, as doing so might take enough pressure off the Klingons for them to get some sort of real offensive going.

The impact of the Hydrans on all of this must also be noted. If the Hydrans are still being a pain (and tying down ships because of it), the Feds have some wiggle room. If the Hydrans are no longer on map, it's the Western Front in 1918 all over again.

On the same note, can the Federation upgrade and deploy bases while at limited war?

James, see 602.49 published in FO. It deliniates exactly what a race at "Limited War" can and cannot do.

They can deploy and upgrade bases, but only in the 4th Fleet area (for example) if supporting the Kzin.

Or the 7th Fleet area if supporting the Tholians, etc.

Specifically, the answer is "yes, but only in the territory of released fleets".
I have yet to find any reason to invade before T10. Sure the Feds are building ships and deploying MBs, but the Klingons are building faster and can use T7 through T9 to put the final nails in the Kzinti and Hydran coffins, plus get everything repaired. Last time I did it, about 300 Klingon ships invaded on T10. Coupled with the Romulans, the Feds were simply overwhelmed by numbers. By the time Gorns were able to join in, the Federation consisted of it's capital and about half of the 5th Fleet area.

By Christopher E. Fant (Cfant) on Monday, May 02, 2005 - 12:38 pm: Edit

If the Coalition can manage to not lose too many ships during the buildup to 10, then yes a T10 invasion is just devastating, and the Feds will be on the defensive for a long time. By the time they come back, nothing will be standing outside the capital.

By Derek Meserve (Sepeku) on Monday, May 02, 2005 - 02:35 pm: Edit

Actually the Feds never came back. With the Feds isolated in their heavily fortified captial, the Klingons were able to take over Fed suppression and let the Romulans destroy the Gorn. The game ended with the fall of the Gorn captial.

By Alan De Salvio (Alandwork) on Monday, May 02, 2005 - 05:14 pm: Edit

Derek, Dmitri or Stevenson would kick your butt if you waited until Turn 10 to attack their Feds - they have even said so on this board. I just wish I could play as well as they do; just look at their posted games! Oh wait, there aren't any.

Does anyone seriously think this is a good idea? If so John, are you willing to be the Alliance player in a Cyberboard game?

In fact, attacking the Feds on Turn 7 is a mistake (compared to waiting until Turn 10). The limited war political rules are punishingly restrictive on them. And, as a bonus, you can even direct their ships to death (if they are so foolish as to fight you) for three turns in the Marquis zone. The delay had a downside when the Kzintis could double up the Marquis SB, but of course that is no longer smart. The only benefit to the Feds is the movement of Home Fleet forward (and I suppose the relative three extra turns of Coalition exhaustion). If the Kzintis and Hydrans are already offmap, I suppose the delay is a waste.

By Jimi LaForm (Laform) on Monday, May 02, 2005 - 05:17 pm: Edit

I disagree, as each game is different sometimes you are forced to delay. Unfortunately the better Alliance players will really make you pay for the delay.

By Alan De Salvio (Alandwork) on Monday, May 02, 2005 - 05:18 pm: Edit

I believe you. What is the payment, exactly?
2 dozen glazed (not chocolate) donuts and a cup of coffee.

I think delaying the attack on the Feds until T10 has a few very clear repercussions:

Probably the largest is that you yield the advantage of a surprise attack. The Feds can use their Home, 2nd, and 5th Fleets (and new construction) to reinforce their borders, meaning that taking down those border SBs just got much more expensive. You can forget about taking down the 7th SB with only 11 ships on it.

In addition, the Klingons lose a fair amount of income by not attacking the Feds. The neutral zone alone can be worth 6 EPs to the Klingons, and holding some provinces and planets can easily be another 6-10. That econ is very useful for the Klingons on T8-10. And so are the 33 ships of the IWR, which are now delayed three turns.

I’m not sure if I see the point to waiting. Yes, you have more time to take out the 2nd minor capital, but for me, the obstacle to taking down that capital has never been time, it’s been casualties. If you have an wherewithal to endure the casualties from two capital captures, you were probably strong enough to win the game anyway with a T7 attack.

Too much Starbucks for you, Jimi.

Home fleet, yes, that is a few ships. 2nd fleet is what, four ships? 5th fleet? I don't think it is released. New construction is a joke. Seriously. Okay, Turn 9 is noticeable. So, 10 more Feds on 4th, 3rd, 7th and 6th starbases? Not impressive - you should look at it.

Lack of Klingon income is balanced by 0.75 multitle on Feds and thorough reduction of other races. IWR balanced by delay of Fed mothball activations (they get 2 per turn).

You really can't have reduced (competently run) Hydrans and Kzinti by Turn 7, so you need the extra time to drive them off efficiently. By efficiently I mean by maintaining SE superiority and using your own fighters.

If your point is you can attack on Turn 7, by all means attack on Turn 7. I can't, when I play I would lose initiative to the Kzintis and the Hydrans by attacking the Feds. Speaking for myself as an Alliance player, I would love to have my Feds attacked on Turn 7, it is like a late Hydran Expedition. This tactic ensures the Coalition never loses initiative, always maintains ship superiority, and eventually wins an automatic victory.
See, I am looking for help. What should the Feds do to make this delay unpalatable for the Coalition?

Actually its 82 ships from the activated fleets, newbuilds, and activations that are allowed to reposition through Fed space. That is alot of repositioning.

Alan, I would be happy to play you on Cyberboard.

Alan, the primary things are really being able to beef up the 4th Fleet area and getting more ships dispersed to the front.

I think that delaying till 10 is the best move available, but there are times when the Coalition is very strong that a T7 attack will net you more for less cost.

I'd put the majority of those 82 ships over the Marquis SB (if alive) the 3rd and 4th SB with just a few more to the 7th.

But Chris, you seem to agree it is a good tactic. Us playing has no bearing on this issue.

Jimi, the Marquis SB dies on Turn 7, so all you can get there is the Turn 6 version 4th fleet reserve. No reinforcements for the Rom front?

That is why I specified (if alive)

=:)

Chris, I am not spam! I have been bent, stapled, rolled, spindled and filtered.

I'll take your 80 ships and raise you 200.

Killing the Marquis starbase on Turn 7 is another benefit of delaying.

Hehe.

One of the major things that happens if the Federation is permitted to have until turn ten before the storm is that the Federation fleet gets refitted. The Feds can
easily afford conversions galore, and those conversions make a difference. The pre-war deployment has token commando coverage, and one or two scouts per fleet. When confronted with a fleet that is loaded with scouts and other specialty ships, it is weak.

Three turns is some construction, true ... it's also a LOT of conversion capacity.

As the alliance, if you really want to goad the coalition into attacking, try doubling up the 4th fleet starbase. No, you don't get victory points for the starbase you build, but you get a strongpoint to keep the coalition from beheading the Federation when they do attack.

You also get to send your survey ships back off-board where they belong so that you can start using them the instant you get to go to wartime economy. Yes, they're nice in single combat, and they're cute in the scout box, but they're survey ships, and nothing else is income.

One of the big things the Feds need to do early on to seriously reinforce is to get as many DD hulls back to the capitol as physically possible, and convert them like gangbusters into SCs. These are the best scouts you ever make, and for some reason, the DD slipways have been given over to NCL construction, so you don't make any. Hence, you'd best get to converting the stock hulls double-time. By the time the coalition crosses the border, all your DDs should have either special sensors or Aegis.

Similarly, buy more carriers. Of course the Feds dedicate their free factors to their CVA program, so you're buying all the fighters, but nothing else is a carrier. If you can't afford them, CCs are your friend. You have an insane conversion capacity as the Feds ... try to maneuver your fleets so as to use it all.

By the time the coalition rolls over your border, at least you'll be fighting a loosing battle with a modern navy.

Mark, you actually put Fed SC or FFS on the line? What else would extras be good for? Your carrier production is quite limited (no escort carrier yet), CVA plus three CVS/B/CLV per year. Commando ships aren't really useful on defense. And converting all your DDs to DEs is great except forming a lot of carrier groups leaves the Feds tactically limited - too few other ships to actually fight. Okay, all your CAs become CCs... I am not intimidated (four more damage to kill with a mauler).

Okay, T7A set up the MB. T8A convert to BATS. T9A, pay for BATS to become SB... Wait a minute, when the Coalition attacks on T10C, it is still a BATS! Mauler kills it, bye-bye upgrade. Hmmm. Not good.
By Robert Padilla (Zargan) On Tuesday, May 03, 2005 - 12:27 pm: Edit

What about 2403 for a hardpoint? You can get a SB AND 6xPDU's there, and that is stronger than just a SB, or a dual SB, even without the new rule on stacking bases. And the best part is, if on Alliance T9 you see the Coalition stacking up to kill your SB upgrade, then just don't do it! A BATS and 6xPDU's is still a nice fixed defense. And please don't forget the 20EP/turn the Feds can be sending the Zin those three turns. Sure the Feds can't spend it all, but the Zin sure can, espically id they're kicked off-map.

By Alan De Salvio (Alandwork) On Tuesday, May 03, 2005 - 12:36 pm: Edit

And you could throw up a few FDUs there. The problem is can you defend it.

Yes, the Feds can ship lots to the Kzintis, but they won't start getting any until T9 since the direct route will be cut T7C. And that offmap route ties up a lot of tugs.

By Mark Ermenc (Mermenc) On Tuesday, May 03, 2005 - 02:11 pm: Edit

Extra SCs permit more fleets. Perhaps your group only engages in one location on a front, but in my games, I expect to see an attack against every BATS and SB on that front, all at once. They may consist of nothing more than an FV group, a D7 and a scout, but it'll be an attack just the same. The more SCs I have, the more times that lovely counter can show up in a form bonus/free scout box to give EW coverage. The more SCs I have, the more reserve fleets I can send somewhere other than a major engagement to salvage a BATS or minor planet. The more SCs I have in a major engagement, the less likely I am to see them directed away.

As for the FFS, you're loosing 3 COMPOT for an EW point when you toss that in your battlegroup. It still takes damage just as nicely, and it's only an EP more.

Remember that in the opening game, the Kzinti are hard up for scouts, and the Lyrans are behaving as if the DWS is the greatest thing since sliced bread. They're winning the EW war, and the natural action for them to take is to begin directing on anything with EW factors. If they keep this mindset going throughout the opening game, guess what happens when the coalition slams into the Feds?

My guess: Round one, the coalition doesn't even put up a mauler, they just line up the cruisers and shoot the moon. 30 damage, no more SC. If you haven't doubled up your scouts for redundancy, you've got (at best) an FFS now for your free scout. You almost might as well not bother putting it in there, except that you can take five damage on it. Round two, the mauler steps up with minus points and a two-shift to protect it. Even if the Feds run and hide, where are they getting a decent scout to put them back into the EW war?

Trust me, you need as many as you can get.

Commando ships defend just fine, please and thank you, especially if your
adversary has gone overboard on them. If I only have one, it generally has to transfer its marine onto a starbase or planet. If I have several, one can be in the line increasing my odds for capture. There are generally enough capture attempts in a game of F&E for the commando ships to start paying off the loss in COMPOT. (Assuming you're building them by substitution.) An LTT with a troop pod is only a couple COMPOT behind a cruiser, and tripling the odds of capture is generally worth a couple COMPOT in my mind.

Increasing the CAs to CCs allows them to deal damage better, take damage better, get left behind to pin as a CR9 ship, and provide more salvage, if I recall correctly. All in all, well worth the conversion. The coalition only has so many maulers, and they are almost the only thing in F&E that has an attrition rate comparable to its construction rate. (I think the other would be the Hydrans.) In the end, combat usually ends up boiling down to conventional warfare, and the CC offers better density, better damage absorption and fights better when crippled.

The Federation starts with thirteen starbases, if I recall correctly. Over three turns, that'll end up being well over forty conversions, thanks to escorts, more if you're using Planetary Ops.

If you really want to go gung-ho on the 4th fleet location, here's how: T7A, setup the three starting MBs there, and start running auxiliary carriers up there. T8A, upgrade all three to BATS(6), and get your auxs adjacent. That's close enough to forward fighters if it's attacked. T9A, roll the Auxs in the last hex and look closely at the board. If it's likely that you will face a large enough assault against that monstrosity as not to be able to pin out the Klingons with a combined Kzinti/Federation force, then either pay the 28EP to force them to attack that location, and pull pressure off the rest of the front, or content yourself with a SB/BATS/BATS/BATS as "enough" deterrent (72COMPOT+30fighters), and get ready for the hammer to fall. If you're playing with P.O., then a couple FDU to give extra approach battles to the megaplex should ensure its safety.

Remember, the coalition may be able to maul those BATS away, but every round (or two, if there are enough minus points) of doing so is another round of the starbase and fleet firing before the coalition has even addressed the starbase issue. The BATS provide EW support for the SB, and they can push forward a swarm of thirty fighters to pin six ships if you would like, plus however many fighters you have on auxiliary carriers locally. If the coalition has been dutifully constructing its E4s, this won't be very exciting, but if it's been munching them like popcorn and waiving constructions, you're starting to pin out FV groups or something. In some games, this will matter a whole lot more than in others (high loss games where the coalition have been burning their fleet to nail and hold both capitols, for instance.

Remember that any analysis of turn 7-10 of course naturally rests on what
happened from turns 1-6. Depending on the local situation, the response differs. If the Kzinti are still standing tall, they probably have something on the order of 10 to 12 CVS groups kicking around, and are starting to become a royal headache for the Coalition. If they've been zipped up into a bag marked "punch me", the Federation is kind of on its own, but hopefully the coalition has a lower fleet count.

Mark,

the strategy (Multiple BATS @ the 4th SB) needs to be reexamined with the new colocated base rules. It is not as much extra COMPOT as you quoted.

Mark, if your opponent is directing on scouts, then of course you need scouts. Simply converting DDs into SCs is not a good strategy if they are not doing so, however, as to use them otherwise requires their placement on the line (where they become a high value, cheap direction cost target). Allowing each reserve fleet to have a scout is great, and having lots of scouts in general is not a bad thing, but making six extra combat ineffective SCs (at 4 EPs a pop) Turn 7 through 9 doesn't strike me as war-winning. NSCs are a different story, as they can fight (too bad their availability sucks), but SCs and FFSs just don't do it for me. They can't be used outside the form bonus effectively.

I don't understand what you are using the commando ships for. Your opponent has to use a marine attack against you for them to be effective marine platforms, so if he doesn't oblige, they sit there with less compot. Granted, a Marine General can use them, but Generals are fairly limited in where they can use that ability (but I admit it is nice to have a couple handy for that, glued to the General). For capturing you have to direct (or your opponent self-kill), and they increase a small chance of capture to a slightly less small chance. And then there is the common situation that your opponent may just direct on the commando ship in the first place, rendering the conversion cost a waste.

CCs are sure better than CAs. Of course, CAs get shot when seen, and so do CCs. A little tougher. As the CAs have to go on the line anyway, making them CCs is certainly smart. It is what I do, as a matter of fact.

Here is a thought experiment for you: The Feds have unlimited cash and conversion capacity. You convert all DDs to SCs and DEs, all CLs to CMC/CLVs, all FFs to FFEs, CFFs, and FFSs, all CAs to CVS/Bs and CCs. You are left with a fleet of specialty ships that can't really take damage (good at CEDSing I suppose) and is almost at minimum offensive compot to boot. If I put my Coalition hat on, I will likely face a negative shift due to EW, and the frigate leader you can direct on has a higher chance of being captured, but I will enjoy the reduced damage I take far more. Certainly the fleet is not better prepared to blunt the offensive.
Making a hardpoint is a great idea, and the 4th starbase is a good place for it, as the northwest shoulder of the Federation has a lot of income in it that the Feds should defend. Unfortunately it is also a long way from the capital and easy to threaten (or fork) along with the capital by the Coalition. I fear that hardpoint can be screened and outflanked (or outright abandoned by the Feds if the capital is seriously threatened). It also means all your tugs are spoken for, so no money to the Kzintis. And no co-located Kzintis either, unfortunately, due to the limited war restrictions. But it is a good way to draw the Coalition in there (if they aren't already coming, of course).

Assume the Coalition has destroyed every Kzinti and Hydran base, has driven the Hydrans offmap, and has taken the Kzinti capital at least once, leaving the Kzintis a wandering tribe with a devastated minor or two to sit on. Then the Coalition leaves equal pin count in each theater and turns towards the Feds with the surplus on Turn 10C. This is why I delay the attack.

By Dave Butler (Dcbutler) on Tuesday, May 03, 2005 - 08:12 pm: Edit

On 3 BATS at the 4th fleet SB:
Compot depends on how the attacker engages.
(a) Picks a BATS to attack == 12 + 6 + 6 + 18 = 42 (12), and you've got 18 fighter factors that could be thrown in counting against the TSL and, possibly, the command limits. As calculated, the remote bases currently produce 1.5 EW (which rounds down to 1); it'd probably be wise to drop 2 COMPOT to dial a BATS up to stop the rounding.
(b) Picks the SB == 36 + 6 + 6 + 6 = 54 (12), with all the extras as above. In both cases, you still get to add a full fleet to back up the bases. (And hey, since the BATS get to fill your TSL, you could even put up a cruiser line, if you wanted.)
(EDIT: Of course, given the EW advantage the Fed BATS have, it's probably better to drop 3 points of compot and end up with 3 points of EW from the distant bases.)
(EDIT2: Or, alternatively, you declare the BATS being upgraded to be excluded and force the attacker into either a fight to destroy each of the other bases first, or into a battle where you've got 72(30) (4+ EW) outside of the command limits.)

By John Doucette (Jkd) on Tuesday, May 03, 2005 - 08:55 pm: Edit

The problem with letting the Feds sit for three turns without taking losses (and they can do that unless the Kzin really are in danger of falling and that's not always a 100% prospect) is that the Feds can, in effect, construct an entire peacetime fleet and make the attack into Fed space that much harder. The best time for the Coalition to make its advances in fed territory is while the Fed production is still shifting from peace to war. That shift is complete by turn 10.

There are lots of good reasons to wait, but there are compelling arguments to go as soon as possible with whatever's handy, too. That was NATO's nightmare and
the Coalition has a decent shot at making it the Fed's nightmare, too.

By Mark Ermenc (Mermenc) on Tuesday, May 03, 2005 - 09:28 pm: Edit

Alan, if you're going to be defending four starbases and operating in Kzinti territory, you need at least eight SCs plus combat losses, assuming you can always retrograde back to your starbase. Two per starbase, just for redundancy's sake.

Perhaps your game group has some "gentleman's code" about the targeting of scouts, but over here it's pretty cutthroat. If I have a single 4ew scout and only 1 pointers for backup, that thing is dead and gone the instant I put it in the free scout box.

So, we're looking at needing about ten or so just to keep the fleet operating smoothly. Naturally we want more. With a CVA group in command, we can put an SC in the form box and another in the free scout box, eating up a small battlegroup slot. That's 3 COMPOT down from the FF you probably wanted to put there, and brings us up to 8 EW, which is almost enough to match the coalition fleet. Tack in a TG/SP/VP+(CLE/DE)+DE if they're getting serious, and you stand a decent chance of not having to dial away all your starbase factors.

Or perhaps in your game, the coalition doesn't regularly fill the three small battlegroup slots with Lyran DWSs to provide 3-6 EW?

Perhaps in your groups, the coalition uses superior numbers to ensure that they can get to their one target without being pinned out, moving a fleet of insane quantity into the one thing they wish to make go away. In our groups, the coalition found that to be too slow, and so uses superior numbers to ensure that they can field forces that stand a reasonable chance of success in many, many locations, thus allowing the alliance player to pick one or two to keep through the use of reserve fleets, and watch the rest die. If you face an onslaught like this, you NEED more scouts. If you expect to divide forty ships into a twenty-ship starbase defence force/reserve element, and five four-ship fleets to fortify minor defence points, then you must expect to need at least seven scouts, and desire fourteen or more. If you expect to do this five times (4th, 3rd, 7th, 6th, Capitol), you can't have too many of the darn things. Besides, if it gets really bad (IE: you find you have way too many of them), just make a line with three SCs in the small battlegroup slots, and another in the form box. That's 16EW, which will give even the coalition pause, and he can only direct on one of them. You have fighters and NCLs to absorb the rest of the damage. Pshaw.

On the subject of commando ships, I can only imagine that your response stems from your group not using marine assaults. That is definitely not the case up here. Trust me that if your opponent is producing large amounts of troop ships,
you need them as well. There's nothing like seeing four or five G attacks coming your way to remind you that the coalition can remove many more than four PDU per round.

Has your group considered the following? Even if the coalition isn't intending to SIDS away a starbase, if they have enough marines present to basically guarantee one of them will break something, a SIDS is four or five extra damage, and that's usually the equivalent damage of 12-15 COMPOT.

Now, if they ARE going to SIDS the base, that's an entire round's worth of damage. The 18 damage a SIDS is worth is the equivalent of packing an extra 54 COMPOT with a free second direct. Alternatively, it's a free 50-point damage sink, as it saves you a round over the starbase. However you want to count it, it's darn handy.

 Needless to say, our group has considered it, and found it worth the 2-3 COMPOT one tends to give up by putting a commando ship on the line. For the defender, it's even more lucrative. A commando frigate "welded" to a starbase unpins a reserve ship, and provides a replacement G by taking a spot on the reserve echelon. Since frigates are often used only to pin/counterpin anyway, this lets one actually assist the war effort.

As for assuming the coalition has rampaged over the entire alliance, I have difficulty doing so. Having played that part of the war a few times from both sides, I don't believe it to be a foregone conclusion.

Craig, fair enough, if you're using the multiple-base errata, then your mileage will vary. I will only say that not every game group uses that rule.

In that case, you definitely want to upgrade one of the BATs on turn 9 to ensure that the coalition attacks it. When they do, they have to ignore the special rules and face the full COMPOT, or you simply exclude the BATs being upgraded, and they get to play with a 46+12[12]{2EW} base, for the privilege of blowing a BAT that isn't the one being upgraded. If they suck it down and face the monster flat even, it's a 72(30){4EW} base, but they only have to face it once to prevent the dual. If you don't bother upgrading it, saving the 28EP for more PDU in the capitol hex or something, when they come to bite it apart, the first BATs is a 52+12[18]{2.5EW} base, the second is a 46+12[12]{2EW} base, and the third is a 40+12[6]{1.5EW} base, and then they're into the 36+12{1EW} starbase.

Note that you've paid 27+18 for the three BATs, and another 28EP if you elect to call for a BATs(6):SB(6) upgrade to force his hand. 73EP sounds like a lot, and in fact it is, but it's less than half a turn's income for even pre-war feds. If you prefer, you can use that cash to overproduce four and a half CAs, but I don't think
you'll get as good value. A strongpoint like that takes a lot of sweating away. It allows fleets to project force.

Heck, if you really just want to slow the coalition offensive down, and make them pay for not attacking you at their first opportunity, upgrade 2004, 2103 and 2201 into SBs. Yes, if you REALLY want to, you can do all that on A7, but you're probably better off doing them 2004 on A7, then 2103 and 2201 on A8, and have them build fighter modules on A9 (since they come into play instantly). Then you position a reserve fleet on whichever you like, to either threaten a counter-offensive or make it difficult to get to. The coalition has to take them all, just for the victory points they offer, much less the added conversion capacity.

Remember, as the Feds, in the opening, you have limited numbers of ships. It behooves you to make the most of them, by converting as many as possible to solid variants that will see service all war. It's hard to go wrong with a carrier. SCs are the best scout you ever get. You get no outside escort better than a DE, and the CLE takes damage very well. There's always room for a CC. The list goes on.

Maximize what your fleet can do, and fortify the fourth fleet zone so you have less space to panic about when they DO cross over the line.

And as another option for the Klingons if they delay their attack, rule (314.35) allows them to raid the Federation without declaring war or activating them, perhaps disrupting some EPs or even hitting an unguarded target with alternative attack.

Let's see. In a very English war, where the Coalition delayed the attack on the Feds...

Drones, scouts, and carriers.... (nb no pods are allowed to be built).

T7
builds 2SWAC
Subs SC,NCD,3FFE
Activations 2CLV
Conversions 2SC,FFE,4DE,2ECL,2CVS,CVL(from COV),2CC

T8
builds CVA group, 2SWAC
Subs FCR
Conversions CVS, 4ECL, DE, 2DN+
Hmm looks like I forgot a CVS, and NCD here. oops. A bit light on the turn.

T9
builds 2SWAC
Subs SC, NCD, FCR, CFF, FFE
Conversions 3CC, SC, CAD, 2CLE, 2CVS, DN+, 2DE,

So, no, I haven't gone quite as bananas as I could have done on SC (5 total), but please note that I brought all 3 CVLs on map, converted the COV to a CVL, and got two escorts (CVL-DE-ECL in that order - ECL outer escort) for most of them.

I certainly did a few conversions, and note that getting all these conversions done was a bit of an administrative nightmare. I'm relying on my aux ships in defence to take up the slack on G's, but my opponent hasn't build many troopships anyway.

The main error was that I built too many FFEs. I should have let my conversions from CLs and DDs fill out all the new escort slots, but in turn 7 I just wanted to crank them out.

NB, on may turns, the Klingon navy was withing strike distance of the Feds as it was busy demolishing the Marquis provinces. Hence, there were chances of strikes during turns 8 and 9. A mistake in this game was the activation of the klingon east fleet by destroying 1807, which was just begging the Klingons to delay attacking the Feds and wreck the Zin. The destruction has had no practical effect, as the klingon fleet is parked in that region anyway come turn 10, with a supply tug and FRD. It's big enough to pin out anything.

By Derek Meserve (Sepeku) on Wednesday, May 04, 2005 - 10:58 am: Edit

Mark,

I have yet to see any Alliance player (in any game I've played) have any Kzinti or Hydran defenses on the map at the end of T8C. Whether or not the fleets stay on map to play is questionable, though they aren't able to accomplish much of anything. Admittedly, I haven't had a wide variety of opponents, so it's possible I'm overlooking something. I would be happy to demonstrate this via Cyberboard if you wish. We could probably both learn a few things.

By David Slatter (Davidas) on Wednesday, May 04, 2005 - 11:27 am: Edit

Derek

You are on if you like. Cyberboard/Email (no real time discussion). I reckon AVEW, which I was playing in, is dead due to the three-player problem that has plagued it. Richard has no time for my game with him, so I'm up for it.
All the rules?

Mark, you are making my argument for me. Here is the crux of it. The Feds can't fight on Turn 7, and waiting until Turn 10 makes their situation worse. You can convert all the scouts you want, it doesn't help their situation. Of course putting your opponent in a EW deficit is nice, and directing on scouts is the way to do it. Unfortunately, only the coalition can afford to build and use the kind of scouts that can effectively fight on the line, which is where they have to be to generate an EW deficit. It is simply ludicrous to claim extra SCs makes a difference. Any you put outside of the form box (or free scout) get killed even if your opponent isn't targeting scouts, so they are really wasted in my opinion. The only time the Feds are going to bag a D6S in the form box is over an SB, and honestly, if you waste a full round's damage directing on a D6S in the form box you likely just lost the battle. No gentlemen's agreement, just the battle math dynamics. The Coalition can afford scout losses, the Alliance simply can't, and attempting to trade scout kills in the form box is even worse for them.

Sure, the Coalition builds/converts plenty of scouts and uses them. Of course, they have the classes available and available early, and they have the time and money to make them. Again, the Alliance doesn't. SCs and FFSs are totally insufficient to the task (again, NSCs are a different story, and CAD and CLD aren't bad either). Too bad those are too little, too late.

And Mark, we use marine assaults constantly. They are nice for the occasional planet assault and undefended BATS takedown. They are very difficult to use against SBs (particularly now with the support rules) and useless against capitals, so once the preliminaries are over they are a waste. You do play with VBIR, right? Even the best laid marine attack round gets stopped a third of the time. We haven't used the garrison rules yet, so maybe that is what you use them for. Pretty tough to have more than about four G attacks in any one round with the consort rules (unless you bring forward you auxiliaries), but your mileage does seem to vary.

We really ought to play, since I need to see how you stop the Coalition for nine rounds. I want to see it, I hope it works.

Huh?

The Coalition can build ONE D6S per year. The Feds can build 3SC. At least in the 4-pt scout war, the Feds win the tit-for-tat equation. SCs in the form and scout boxes when playing the CVA with SWACS work very well.

If you say the coalition can afford to direct on form-bonus Fed scouts more than
the Federation can afford to direct on on-line coalition scouts, then you may as well say that the alliance will always lose.

Sure, the SC is more expensive than the DWS. But the Feds do not normally build DD hulls anyway unless they are flush with cash (except for the CVA-DEs). It cost 20 to pop that DWS (which must *get* to the Fed front in any case), and 30 to pop the SC. Given that the Feds are probably defending a hardpoint, that's 20-25 extra damage the coalition have to resolve while it's all the coalition damage to the feds.

Besides, given that the Feds will probably have 11+ EW if they brought their CVA, and 5 minus points, who's to say that the coalition will get the required 35 damage? And if they use a Mauler or a BIG LINE (tm) to pop the SC in form, then the Feds are very happy to kill the mauler or BIG SHIP(tm) in return.

Can I go back a minute and ask a question. Someone mentioned putting 3 DWS as a battle group as a standard tactic. Is that really that effective? Lyran DWS's are armed scouts, so to get their 2 EW points, you need to drop down to 2 COMPOT, so 3 DWS as opposed to 3 DW costs you 13 COMPOT, which is about 3-4 damage at normal BIR. If you use this tactic, you'll probably generate a 2 shift, so you're saving yourself about 5 damage. So for the cost of 3 DWS, one of which will probably die, you're netting about 1 damage point. Doesn't seem like a killer tactic to me--useful in certain situations, but not game changing. Am I missing something?

One of the things I will freely admit to is that in all the games I've played thus far, there's been at least one novice player, and that changes the dynamics of play significantly. The problem is that there aren't many F&E players up here, so we have to rotate new blood through the board, hoping that some will stick, as it were.

Now, that said and done, I've seen some "mistakes" pan out quite nicely. As the hydrans in the game I'm in now, I nearly sacked the Lyran capitol, which was a mistake on both my part, and the part of the Lyrans, and yet we're both strangely content with how it ended up panning out. I should never have gone, but I'm glad I did. He should have defended it stronger, but is glad he didn't. (I took a lot of damage burning through what WAS there).

So, in the end, the one true lesson I've learned about F&E is that there is nothing guarenteed. One mistake on anyone's part, and the whole plan falls apart, or comes together.

As the alliance player, I generally don't direct. With very few exceptions, I just let the damage fall. Is that a smart thing to do? In the short run, yes. In the long
run, probably not. But it does slow down the coalition offensive, and every turn that I get income for my space instead of him is another turn, and I only have to survive for so many.

So, in a case where you're facing an absolutely top notch opponent who rarely makes a strategic blunder, and who's luck with dice is distressing to behold, you've little opportunity to survive, much less win. In a case where you're playing someone who's still figuring out the rules, and seems to be playing with a d3, you can build whatever you like, and still come out on top.

But none of that changes the fact that you still need to approach the game the same way. You need certain elements to make your fleet fight more effectively. Scouts, carriers, FCRs, troop ships, they all have their place. When the war gets hectic, you won't have the time/money to make them, and they tend not to die off (or else die so fast that you need stockpiles of them). Hence, when given time to prepare, you prepare these things.

If you can safely pull your CAs back to get them upgraded to CCs, go to town. It's the same reason that you pack high density lines over your capitol ... because you can! When you know what the enemy is directing on, you can build your line appropriately.

Take advantage of any information your adversary gives you.

In this case, the information is the assault date.

I'm not trying to say that the Federation gains large quantities of power by being left alone ... in all likelihood, they're probably better off being driven into a wartime economy as early as possible. The extra turns of economy before exhaustion are peachy-keen, but you have to live to use them. Yet the coalition is picking the time of the attack. If they've delayed their offensive, it behooves the Federation to use that time in any way that they can.

Convert, fortify and maneuver. It's all you can do, but it's not futile. It will have an effect on the war. Your fleets are really not up to handling the invasion T7. By T10, they're a better fleet, but you're facing twice as many invaders, without twice as many ships.

It's a mess, but what else are you going to do? Pen them a sternly worded letter?

The two Fed turns of full wartime economy missed (T8 and T9) are probably the only downside to the Coalition, but you are right, that is a big deal for the Alliance if they survive that long.
Since when are the Feds allowed to convert that COV to a CVL? Last I checked, you could only replace losses of the original 3.

For every CVA battleforce with the luxury of an SC for the DN in the form bonus, the Coalition can create a 3xD6D and D5S or two in the battlegroup battleforce that will burn the paint off the CVA with EW. In all other cases, the DN is in the form box for the Feds, not another SC, so let's talk apples and apples, not apples and oranges. Run the Coalition out of D6S (losing every close battle in which you do so), and you will be faced with D5S instead. Run out of SC and you use... FFS?

Exactly my point, Alan ... you can't afford to run out of SCs, so you need to build more, especially if you have "free time". If you have too many, you can always find a use for them. There is so much EW on the coalition line, that you need to build more to keep up, or you get burned.

Or are you suggesting that the Feds should just stop scout production entirely and just get used to a 2-shift in all future engagements?

C Fant.

I thought that you could do anything you liked with your GSC hulls (GSC/COV/CVL) except build more than you already have. I could be wrong.

At least when defending a SB, I'd rather have an SC over a DN in the form bonus, unless I'm having DNs and SCs on the line anyawy, in which case it may be a non-escorted CVL or COV there.
The last thing you want to do is dial down a SB to get the EW status where you want it.

Mark? Do you want a game? I'm not *that* bothered, but I can show you how the Hydran/Zin alliance stay on-map, at least until turn 8 (it may get dodgy turns 9+ if you don't attack the Feds and go all out against the Zin/Hydran, but I would expect to hold).

Well, the rules say that more CVLs/COVs cannot be produced except as replacements. I take that to mean you can have 3 CVLs and 1 COV. I'll ask Nick though.
David,

I'm up for that game, though I've never done Cyberboard strictly by email. And we would need a method for die rolling (Cyberboard's roller repeats its sequences). All the rules: all modules and Captain's Log AARs.

By Mark Ermenc (Mermenc) on Thursday, May 05, 2005 - 10:58 am: Edit

To one and all, I prefer my games face to face, but I'm honoured by the offers. I may yet someday take you folk up on them, but for right now I'm a bit leery to do so. There's just something too impersonal about the idea of the cyberboard for my preference. I like to look my adversary in the eye.

And as for the alliance staying on-map, we're rolling into C8 in our game here, and both alliance capitols stand. The marquis provinces are untouched and the Hydrans still have their 0215 starbase. Now, I expect some of that to change during C8, but it would surprise me to loose it all. The coalition has been slowly chiseling away at the Hydran capitol (there are no PDU left in that hex), and putting pressure on the Kzinti, but it doesn't look like they're going to win a 3-capitol victory, at least not any time soon. So, being the alliance player, I'm awfully content overall. Of course, our exact situation exists because of a series of blunders made by both sides of the war, and how we capitalized on each other's gaffes, but that's just the nature of the beast.

Mind you, David, if you've some mystical trick for further punishing the coalition, I'm all ears ...

By David Slatter (Davidas) on Thursday, May 05, 2005 - 11:04 am: Edit

Mark

Nah. If you are holding both alliance capitols into CT8 then you don't need my mystical tricks. Indeed, you are doing better than normal.

Derek

I will try to send you an "agreed rules" sheet soon. Richard Abbott did it all sometime.

By John Doucette (Jkd) on Thursday, May 05, 2005 - 11:19 am: Edit

It's A9 in my current FtF game and both the Hydran and Kzin capitals are standing, though the Hydrans have lost all their on-map defences outside the capital, something I (and my opponent) attribute more to a lack of intersection between Coalition strategy and capability as opposed to brilliant Alliance play 😊

On the specialty ship issue, I find it comes down to how your opponent plays, in
some ways. We hardly ever build troop ships in our games because we only ever use them to aid in capture attempts, which isn't that much of a help, really, but better than nothing. The reason they hardly ever conduct G attacks is that we have a seemingly inbred distaste for ramping combat up to those levels. Most of our battles are conducted at BIR 2-3 and we like it that way.

Scout production is perhaps our primary specialty ship, mostly due to the fact that the Klingons hardly ever use drones. Instead, rather than go into the hole, the Klingons put their drone ships on the line, so the Alliance tends to put scouts in the BG. In fact, it's becoming standard for the Alliance to try and get a 'battle' scout (CW variant) in the line with a smaller scout in the scout box in order to reduce the EW penalty.

The most bizarre development, however, has been the Klingon penchant for putting LAVs in the line, with D6Vs and FVs feeding fighters forward to the 'heavy' carrier 😊. It's surprisingly effective, too, in a relatively low-BIR environment. Perhaps even in a high one ;)

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By Christopher E. Fant (Cfant) on Thursday, May 05, 2005 - 11:58 am: Edit

David,

Nick and SVC confirmed, you can't have more than 3xCVLs and 1xCOV in the fleet, ever. Just FYI.

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By Christopher E. Fant (Cfant) on Thursday, May 05, 2005 - 11:59 am: Edit

yeah, LAV in the form box makes for a nice crusier 😊

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By Alan De Salvio (Alandwork) on Thursday, May 05, 2005 - 12:54 pm: Edit

Mark, I wish you happiness with all your SCs in your face-to-face games. If both sides are killing scouts or if neither side is killing scouts, SCs don't work on the line, they are too easy to kill. If you think a four point major conversion to a scarce ship type is worth throwing away on the line (as a 20 point directed damage shot), so be it.

As for the Alliance holding both capitals through T8 (when the Coalition delays the Fed attack), I have never seen it. Which means we should be playing you guys to learn.

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By Craig Tenhoff (Cktenhoff) on Thursday, May 05, 2005 - 03:16 pm: Edit

Alan,

a couple questions:

A) Shipbuilds and conversions? What do you skip when the cash is tight.

b) How Aggressive is the Alliance? Don't attack at all, attack targets of opportunity,
attack all out?
c) Do you always direct or mostly let the damage fall?

As the Alliance, I try to maximize pin counts first of all, but upgrading Kzinti Escorts is a close second. I also try and maximize the Capital System PDU's and build up the Scout Pods, but am willing to sacrifice or delay those to maintain pin count/escort quality. I'll substitute a smaller hull if necessary to keep up the numbers of ships I have (i.e. HR for RN, 2 Z-FF for the standard CL, etc). Heck I've even sacrificed a Hydran PDU for 3 HN, just to force the Klingons to bring more ships (mostly E4s) into the theater to get into the Capital.

I try to balance my aggressiveness with the Alliance with the need to maintain ship count and cut down the Coalition ship count. I try and maximize attacks against garrison ships, and try to force SSC, since that increases the odds of a ship kill and I get the salvage 😊. A Kzinti CC, FFG, and SDF make a great 14pt hunter killer stack, and if a reserve shows up, I lose a FFG, big deal 😏.

If a Coalition Reserve is not in a position to attack one of my major targets, I may avoid attacks in an area to delay its arrival in theater. This is especially true with the Hydrans on Turn 3 vs the Klingons (30 some ships from the HW and SR can't reach the SBs or Capital if they don't go into Klingon Space IIRC). Its a bit trickier on the Kzinti front, but it can be done. In fact, I've launched spoiling attacks with the Kzinti toward the Klingon BATS near the WYN, since if the Reserve DID go there, it couldn't reach the Capital on the next turn. Of course, I could retreat and retrograde to it 😊. It doesn't seem like much, but this can buy you a turn, depending on how the Coalition has deployed, especially if the Reserve has a bunch of the Specialty ships necessary for the attack.

Also, you have to watch for opportunities. Fighting Retreats over single ships with a large battleforce (ok you take 10% of 80 from my fleet and I take 50% of 5 from your F5. Oh, I lost some fighters and you lost a F5 😥).

If you get a chance to disrupt the repair park take it. Or even threaten it and you can buy time. Naturally, watch out for a trap 😊. I remember getting into the Klingon/Lyran repair park in 1407 because the Coalition was moving SAFs up and their main force was guarding them. I threatened the SAF force, but he couldn't react without exposing it, so I moved PAST it to the repair park. I destroyed a few FRD, caused more cripples and caused the cripples waiting to be repaired NOT to be returned for an additional turn. Naturally, I lost ships ( a
couple good specialty ships too 😁) but the Coalition couldn't direct too much in that case, since if they did they risked losing the ENTIRE hex, instead of the MB upgrade and a few FRDs.

As the Alliance, I try to minimize directed damage attacks to key units in key battles. Naturally Maulers are usually prime targets, but I normally only get a good shot at them over fixed defenses with a decent fleet. Otherwise, I let the damage fall and try and overload the repair parks. Each turn a ship isn't fixed is one less hull on the front. When combined with maximizing your own hulls, you can pin out a majority (if not all) the enemy from key hexes. Sure you outnumber me by 5 hulls. Do you want to have 5 DNs attack 1401 unsupported 😊

Each of these things by themselves isn't much. But a speed bump here, a bit of delay there, and all of a sudden the Alliance is holding one (or even both) Capitals on Turn 7 or 8.

I'm sure the others can share their approach.

By Mark Ermenc (Mermenc) on Thursday, May 05, 2005 - 04:35 pm: Edit

That sounds about right, Craig.

One thing I would add is that as the alliance, you have a moral imperative to get your fighters killed every round. This you MUST attack. Either split up your fleet to maximize the number of "irrelevant" open space battles that you engage in, or drive hard into a coalition supply point, such as a BATS, which you KNOW they're willing to defend. The extra COMPOT from the BATS can hurt a bit, but it's usually just fighter casualties, since they've got enough damage with their fleet to maul anyway.

These counterattacks can start to add up fast.

The Kzinti build a lot of carriers, and they are hard to force off. If the Kzinti nail supply points such as the 1307, 1407, 1507, 1506 arc, the coalition has to begin playing tricks (convoys, tugs, etc.) to keep itself in supply, and even more tricks to give it useful retrograde options. When you get all your FCRs in one place, and run out of money to build more, you should have around thirty or so replacement fighters kicking around. Unless you hit something exciting, the coalition is never going to give you enough rounds of combat to burn them off.

The Hydrans have the density to murder a BATS with ease, and there are even less "staging point planets" in Hydran space than in Kzinti space. Furthermore, they have the advantage of the surprise attack, which should account for a few BATS right there. Continuing to launch retaliatory strikes will begin to confound enemy logistics.
Once you start letting the damage fall, you have to fight as often as you possibly can. Every hull you cripple is another step towards your goal. You can't ease up, even to preserve your own fleet, as you HAVE to overload their repair capacity and keep it overloaded. Raid them, and take every opportunity to disrupt their economy. Even one EP matters.

Also, don't forget that these BATS are also worth victory points later, too.

I haven't played with the new Drone and Fighter Raid rules yet, but I believe that will give the Kzinti another tool to attrition the Coalition with their fighters (and to some extent drone ships).

Since to stop these raids, the Coalition has to maintain a patrol in the LAUNCHING hexes, adjacent to the target, these ships cannot be used in offensive operations and then Retrograde to these Open Space hexes. So a good sized raid force (Drone & CV) can be a good fleet in being that forces the Coalition to tie up extra ships on the defense.

(A) Kzinti and Hydran PDUs on the capital only. MECs/FKEs. Tugs instead of cruisers until all the good pods are in use (certainly the scout pods of each flavor, got to have those). DNs (to become CVAs). Pincount thereafter. I don't like HRs in general, too expensive, but sure, sometimes. I never overbuild with the Kz and Hy, I'll save instead.

(B) Targets of opportunity. I have tried very aggressive and not very aggressive and neither works (for me). I try to inflict more damage than I will receive (unless the target is worth it). Savaging the FRD park is always worth it, but essentially always impossible in my games. My opponent is a real SOB and he will tempt me, but then I get in there with not enough and get crushed in the approach.

(C) I try to generate total kills, so cripples on my turn (that are not collocated with repairs), cripples during a battle I will win (and can pursue), cripples during a close battle I need to win. Otherwise directing. Directing commonly happens if the coalition has plenty of fighters, but if general damage is enough to drive critical units off the line, for example, I will drop the damage even if there is a juicy target. I can survey the created battlehexes and determine if general damage is a good idea - this is a very fluid choice turn to turn. Maulers are a high priority target of course.

I find it is difficult to force SSC, since the 1.5 rule only allows it in close battles and I would rather not risk a ship in an even fight. For example, your 14 compot force can only use SSC against a 10 point garrison or better (the F5 gets to run
from it after one round of normal combat, according to the rules). But I certainly pound garrisons when I can. Unfortunately my opponent tends to garrison with unraidable stacks.

Careful activation of reserves - standard. I usually don't attack the Klingons with the Hydrans on Turn 3 for this very reason. And Lyran reserves are sometimes way back so they can get avoided Turn 1 and 2. The fighterless Lyrans can be hurt by counterattacks though, so sometimes it is worth it.

I find the more numerous Coalition can arrange useful fighting (or non-fighting for that matter) retreats far more frequently than the Alliance can, but they are nice when they work.

Yep, the FRD park is a good target, as is any slow unit (such as an SAF), if you can get in there. Usually I am woefully outnumbered.

And yes, cripples during the Coalition turn can create an opening during the Alliance turn, but only if your opponent allows it to happen. Mine doesn't. It is trivial to count hulls and avoid it. Nothing is more depressing than crippling entire attacking fleets and still being pinned out on your own turn, only to see those same ships again and again.

Usually I have an SB left over Kzintai come Turn 6 or so, best case. The Hydrans go quickly. I have delayed things by trapping major coalition fleets OOS temporarily, but then I was once trapped out of my own Kzinti capital myself so that goes both ways. I always look for the Hydran Expedition - when it succeeds, it is a game-winner. I find it hard to succeed with an expedition these days.

I appreciate your insights!

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By Alan De Salvio (Alandwork) on Thursday, May 05, 2005 - 05:37 pm: Edit

Sadly Mark, those tactics are subject to pinning. Sure, every battle in which the Alliance has superiority they can inflict relatively favorable losses. You won't find yourself in many of those after T2A as the Kzintis and T3A for the Hydrans. It is all a matter of numbers. I want you to do general damage to my Coalition, as I can repair those ships, and right back atcha. Why fight a lengthy battle in open space in which I am disadvantaged and could cripple my ships in exchange for fighters? I won't. If the Alliance trades ships with the Coalition, the Alliance runs out first. If you are forced to trade ships with your fighter killing attacks, you run out of ships (and quickly, and faster the more you attack).

By Craig Tenhoff (Cktenhoff) on Thursday, May 05, 2005 - 06:04 pm: Edit

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Quote:

(A) Kzinti and Hydran PDUs on the capital only. MECs/FKEs. Tugs instead
of cruisers until all the good pods are in use (certainly the scout pods of each flavor, got to have those). DNs (to become CVAs). Pincount thereafter. I don't like HRs in general, too expensive, but sure, sometimes. I never overbuild with the Kz and Hy, I'll save instead.

There's one difference between our styles. I'll actually skip DNs and BCs to keep my CM and FF count up. As long as the Kzinti have their Tugs and are defending a few locations, their 2 DNs and BTV Tugs give them enough command slots. a CM and FF has 3 more overall COMPOT than a BC and one extra pin count. 2 CMs and 2 FFs have 6 more overall COMPOT than a DN and THREE extra pin counts.

The HR is a down sub for a Ranger when things get tight. I also down sub a LN for a HR when things get tight for the same reason. I love the Density of the bigger ships, but the more ships I have as the Alliance the more trouble I can cause.

I'll have to go look at 318 in AO again regarding SSC. I also forgot that its good to add a Prime Team to those small forces. 2 COMPOT if it goes to regular combat, which is usually enough to cripple the F5 in the first round and then give you a chance to capture in pursuit. (Especially if you go with a DNL, FFG, and SF).

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**Quote:**

Why fight a lengthy battle in open space in which I am disadvantaged and could cripple my ships in exchange for fighters? I won't. If the Alliance trades ships with the Coalition, the Alliance runs out first. If you are forced to trade ships with your fighter killing attacks, you run out of ships (and quickly, and faster the more you attack).

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For the Kzinti you exchange a EFF for 3 - 4 cripples a round.

Battle line would be something like:

CC & 3 CV Groups supported by a Scout of some type and Prime Teams. Compot between 75-81.

Coalition can kill one EFF a round and X fighters. Kzinti can cripple 2-4 ships a
Whatever you do in this situation, DON'T put standard ships on the line, it gives the Coalition better targets to direct on.

Another line to try would be:
BTV 3*CV Groups, where one of the CV Groups holds back 3 ftrs. BTV groups would have any MEC you have available.

Still another would be:
DN+ADM, 2*CV, 6*FF (risks losing multiple FFs if the damage is let fall)

With enough CVs (and CVLs if the enemy can't field a high end force), you can attrition the enemy even in open space. Naturally you have to watch out for a High BIR and Maulers, but since you're on the offensive you can try avoid some Maulers (and the others should've been shot when attacking your SBs and Planets 😜). Try and save up any EFKs for the Enemy's turn when they are attacking, giving them the choice of killing a EFK or the Target (PDUss or SB).

Do you lose ships, YES! But you lose ships on your turn and can CEDS replace them. The enemy cripples can't be returned for TWO turns, unless they are field repaired (one turn to return to repair facility, one turn to repair).

And if the enemy doesn't direct on your CV line, you cripple the CV or Inner Escort and then CEDS repair them 😊.

So you're trading 1 pin count killed for 2-4 enemy pin counts crippled a round. In the long run, the enemy will be able to overwhelm you, since he'll be able to repair his ships. BUT in the short run, you should be able to keep ship parity, which should slow the enemy down. Especially if you give him a backlog of cripples.

The idea is to attrition the enemy as best as possible.

Perhaps the DNs are unwise, but I like them. I don't build BCs (maybe if I am really flush with cash), and only those Hydran cruisers that can immediately be converted to tougher command cruisers. Otherwise I am with you, pincount is critical.

You will find the advanced SSC rule also refers back to 310, where the 1.5 rule is.

Of course, but the Coalition retreats immediately from those battles (particularly
open space battles), and I can only triple my CVs in two hexes (three hexes later on). So I end up generating the minimum cripples possible. This is the counter tactic, and it works. Yes, isn't CEDS wonderful? The problem is the Klingons can use it right from Turn 2 on as well, and often better since they have so much more onmap repair capacity. I hate it when my opponent uses my best tactical option as well, I tend to not make any progress against him as a result.

By Dale Lloyd Fields (Dylkha) On Thursday, May 05, 2005 - 09:14 pm: Edit

One aspect that hasn't been addressed (as far as I can see when starting this post) are the economic ramifications to the Kzinti. Consider that the backbone of the Kzinti fleet are its CV groups. The Coalition can kill them directly, or "mission-kill" them by denying them their FF escort. If the CV doesn't have an FF escort, it likely won't see battle as it will be too easy to kill. Thus the whole "run the Kzinti out of escorts" strategy. But the Kzinti get 14 FFs per year, so that shouldn't be a problem, right? 14 FFs after giving 2xFF to the 2xCVs they build/convert to year works out to 3xFF which can be used to replace dead escorts per each side's turn.

It is easy to get 14 damage to kill an EFF. A medium-to-small Coalition force of 50 ComPot does it on a 27.5%. Essentially, each non-SSC battle the Kzinti engage in, the Coalition will have the potential to kill an FF.

If one considers it axiomatic that every Kzinti CV has to have an FF escort, one can do a simple calculation to determine the economics. Assume that after fighters the Kzinti either lose an FF (directed) or take some quantity of cripples (self-selected). The cripples will likely be even-hulled as they have CV, CVL, BC, TV, CL, CLE, DD, EFF and their few odd-hulls (MEC, FKE) are rare (at least initially).

The first 6xFF/full-turn replaced are at normal production rates:
Dead EFF: 3.5 EP
Equivalent Cripples: 14 damage on CV, FF gives 3.5 EP

Any subsequent lost FFs/turn are replaced at overproduction rates:
Dead EFF: 6 EP (say overprod but EFFed by CEDS)
Equivalent Cripples: 24 damage (3xBC repair at 6 EP).

What does this mean? If the Kzinti get into fights that result in more than 6xFF dead/full turn, they lose out unless these are battles in which the Coalition choses not to direct. Technically the Coalition choses whether to direct. The Kzinti just have to figure out how to make the Coalition's choice for them.

Straw Man Example #1) If I'm the Coalition, and FF#7 comes up and we're fighting a small battle where I can run away at any time, and I deal 22 damage, would I let it fall on your 18 fighters and let you cripple something that will have 1 EP effective loss? Or instead would I direct on an FF escort which will cost 6 EP
Straw Man Example #2) If I'm the Coalition, and FF#7 comes up and we're fighting a battle where I can't run away, I can likely outlast you (after all, I'm the Coalition) so I just have to wait for you to leave. I could do that by letting you kill all your fighters and taking cripples (if our strengths are somewhat similar), or directing on key targets if I have a bunch more strength that you. If I don't do enough to maul your DN in form, should I spend my 40 points mauling a CV group or letting you cripple your own ships since your 18 fighters won't be nearly enough?

I know these are situations where I've stacked the deck, but they idealize a point. Simply getting into many battles as you can for the Kzinti is bad. You have to know which battles to get into if you plan on attriting the Coalition (cripples) without being attrited yourself (FFs). If you are committed to simply maintaining the number of FF escorts you have to limit the number of total rounds you fight (momentum->Coalition), or you have to limit the kind of rounds you fight (momentum->Alliance).

Okay, and there are the modifiers. If the Kzinti are building FCRs, they're building fewer FF escorts. If the Kzinti have their full load of TGs and MECs for every CV, they can substitute and get more FFs at the low cost. If many small fights do enough damage to the Coalition that you won't need all your CVs on the battle line on the coming turn, you can afford to give them escorts next turn. The Kzinti start out with extra FFs (true FF, the EFFs from CVLs & CVEs, etc.) and they can lose more than they make for a while. The Kzinti can save by ad-hocing true FFs...

I guess my point is that the Kzinti sadly cannot pursue a "Scream and Leap" strategy, even if it is an attrition one. Consider just how you pursue it so that you don't become attrition's victim.

[Edit: I'm not directing my comments to anyone specifically. It is just that it is my opinion that the Hegemony is the Empire that is the most difficult to play effectively. Yet, when played to their best they are eclipsed by only the Federation and the Klingons]
to doctrine, and the DW doesn't come into play for a fair while, so they are actually somewhat limited. This kind of thing can start to be a real pain, and if you replace the destroyed escort with an FCR to keep the carrier on the line, you leave the MEC vulnerable to a mauler.

Still, nothing comes for free. It takes a lot of resolve for the coalition to let the DNLS and CLDs live, and target the EFFs. If the Kzinti are going for a "this turn we kill this ... send everything" retaliation style, even more so, since they have fewer engagement opportunities. The coalition has to face the "all my white counters" stack for multiple rounds to keep nailing escorts, and that serves the alliance by letting their FCRs and unescorted weak carriers get into the act. Furthermore, the Kzinti can always "fatten up" their carrier groups with an extra medium escort to make it more expensive to blast those frigates. Yes, it hurts to have your carrier groups perpetually rotated to the back, but at the same time, those little frigates are chewing up a lot of coalition damage points for you. I'm always proud of a 3.5EP unit that sucks down 14 or 15 damage for me, and gives back 0.625EP ... that's around 5 damage per EP, which is about as good as I could hope for with repair. If I'm really hard up, a stock FF does just fine, eating 12 damage at a 6.4 dmg/EP return rate. Sure, they can use maulers, but maulers cost about a buck a shot (3EP to repair, 1/3 shock chance).

Everything has it's merits and flaws. Campaigns of direction are a package deal.

Still, I'd agree that EP is probably the best yardstick to use in these considerations. We generally find (in our group, you may find differently) that economic damage is the best way to measure how much "hurt" you've put on the other side.

I think what it really boils down to is that it's nice to run these numbers in a vacuum and have a "must do this to win" strategy all set to go, but once you make contact with the enemy, you have to be ready to discard that plan in favor of the actual tactical, strategic and logistical situation.

Having done these sorts of thought experiments makes you better able to modify your plans to suit the situation, but they do not provide "always absolute" answers.

I find it almost impossible for the coalition to kill 7 Zin frigates a turn unless the Zin let them. Basically, the coalition will be fools to direct on EFFs when they are attacking a SB, as that may well mean they don't take the SB. And the Zin won't let the coalition have too many opportunities to kill EFFs in the alliance turn.

Now there will be exceptions. Occasionally, the Zin will try to defend a BATS. Occasionally, the Zin might try to mangle the FRD park or do a major offensive.
However, in the latter case, the coalition usually gets opportunities to kill whole carrier groups or other more significant targets.

One of my pet problems with F&E is that you simply cannot kill in combat the number of ships that are being built each turn unless you are self-killing them. But the game is still excellent as is.

David,

Dale and I are playing the Backdraft scenario. It's just a bit different than The Wind. The Kzinti spend a lot more time fighting over Coalition fixed defenses where it is a good idea to drive his carriers off the line any way we can and we haven't had a problem killing 7 or 8 FF hulls per turn.

Actually, I find that the real problem is not the rising ship count, it's the way the pinning works ...

"I block you from reaching your target with a screening force."

"Very well, I engage your screening force, and attempt to push through to my objective."

"No, my screening force declines to fight, and after the first minimal engagement, it retreats."

"So then I'm free to carry on to my objective, right?"

"No, you can't proceed, you have to stay and fight us."

"What?!?!?!"

If there was a mechanic which permitted you to advance onwards once the defender stopped fielding a line, not only would the game make more sense, but this entire notion of "must build more frigates to maintain pin parity, must not self-kill, must grow ship count" would die away, because a fleet of garbage is of little use to you when you actually have to fight to defend something.

I've proposed such (informally) in discussions before, but few were interested.

It would still change the game somewhat, but an interesting rule that would meet some of those objectives is that if the defender pins out an attacking force, they must fight up to three rounds to justify the "pin." The attacker could retreat at any time. Such a rule would have a lot of implications, that would probably
benefit each side at different times.

Unfortunately, that's the way the cookie crumbles, even in the real world. It's annoying to the attacker being forced to stop and deploy against a smaller, or at least weaker, force, but if you look at almost any rearguard or screening action throughout history, you'll find it happening again and again. Being unable to force a pinning force to fight more than one round of minimal combat is a reflection of reality which shouldn't be tinkered with.

...well if he retreats after one round, then you can always choose to not retrograde and press into the target on the next turn.

Paul Bonfanti,

I had proposed a similar idea awhile ago, though I was more focused on huge fleets fighting only one round and skipping away.

I proposed that if both sides had huge fleets, pinning each other, there would be a minimum number of battle rounds, to reflect the larger scale of that rearguard screening engagement.

Basically, you look at the side with the least number of ships, and for every multiple of 10, you have to fight at least one round. If it's a 20 vs. 20 ship fight, there's at least 2 rounds of combat. If there's a 100 vs 100 ship fight, there's going to be at least 10 rounds of combat.

If either side has a smaller force, you use that to calculate minimum battle rounds, because they can't force the larger fleet into a longer battle, and the larger fleet can't force a smaller fleet to fight longer either. It's only when equal forces (pinning each other) that we have longer battles. Think of it as one big battle round, spread out over a wide area, represented in game terms as multiple rounds. The wider the area of pin battle, the more rounds it takes to represent the actual one-round battle.

This is not exactly what you were looking for, as you wanted a more specific situational rule to deal with being pinned out of a capital, but it might work.

As for your idea, it makes more sense, to have to fight 3 rounds, but small engagements get messy real quick. If I had 12 ships moving through, and you tried to pin out half with 6 reacting ships, I could stop to engage you, 12 vs 6, and in the three rounds of combat I'm going to slaughter you. Those 6 ships have
to be able to escape after just one round, or the game ramifications get enormous.

Ideas?

*~*~*

Marc Ermenc,

Talk to David Slatter, about his no-pinning rules. It's only in basic proposal status, but his idea is to allow the defender to react and hit the incoming attackers, then the attacker continues forward, and the defender continues to react to fight them again. In theory an attacking fleet could fight multiple battles in one turn to fight his way to the capital, then face the defenders over the capital (the same defending force that had been harassing him all the way in).

You would have to consider his whole package deal of rules; otherwise the coalition would surely win if they can assault any strongpoint at will. For example, David also has slower movement rates, and harsher supply rules, so the coalition fleet would have to build a forward base before hitting the Kzinti capital, and still might not be in supply by the time they reach the capital.

It's more of a total re-write than I'm looking for, but it's quite novel and may prove quite workable.

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By John Doucette (Jkd) on Friday, May 06, 2005 - 05:03 pm: Edit

Leave the pinning rules as they are; we've enough fantasy in this game as is.

By Christopher E. Fant (Cfant) on Friday, May 06, 2005 - 05:24 pm: Edit

I really enjoy this game. For those of you who consider carriers invulnerable by the way, I just killed 5 in a turn, and yes, I am bragging a little

By Trent Telenko (Ttelenko) on Friday, May 06, 2005 - 05:30 pm: Edit

I think people have missed the implications of fighter strikes for Kzinti strategy.

There are lots of province Coalition holding FF's the Kzinti can hit with fighter strikes to avoid ship losses and Coalition reserves.

CVE, CVL, TG+VP, POL-CV all can fighter strike and teaming them with Aux-CV in the adjacent hex to replace fighter losses between combat rounds means that the Kzinti can thwack lots of Coalition province holders and still hit one or two major targets with CVA/CVS plus FCR carrier strike fleets.

Add normal raids, drone and CV special raids to clear reaction force free safe paths for the Aux-CV encumbered fighter strike groups and you have a new
strategy for the early turns that forces the Coalition to face a lot more Kzinti fighters in combat early. All the Kzinti have to do is hit either 15 combat factors or 1.5 times the FF's compot to roll to inflict attritional damage on the FF.

This is also an argument for the Hydrans to build more CVs simply to have the option of 'fighter striking' Coalition stacks to burn up fighters as hybrid fighter factors can be transferred to fighter striking CVs between combat rounds.

Just to be clear, I wasn't complaining or trying to propose a new rule, more just mentioning an idea. I like the game the way it is too, Chris, even though I've never killed more than 2 carriers in a single turn.

Trent

I was excited about using fighter strikes as a safe method to kill province garrisons until I realized that the garrison forces can simply react over to the carriers when they show up in the adjacent hex. Sure you can move your forces back out, and fighter strike back into the reacted hex, but you have to leave at least one hull there to satisfy pinning. I have always wanted to do a fighter strike from a Hydran IC+2xDE+AH group, but never got the chance. This would be a good TacNote if you fleet starts next to a garrison force, however. Say you just lost a SB or BATS, retreated, and the Coalition left a garrison in the ex-base hex.

"For those of you who consider carriers invulnerable by the way, I just killed 5 in a turn, and yes, I am bragging a little."

WooHoooo!!!!

Which game was that? I assume it's posted in Reports from the front? I'm off to take a look-see...

The notion that an attacker that is posessed of superior hardware and support will be stymied on their offense EVERY SINGLE TIME by an ambush that consists of the defenders firing one shot and running for it is utter nonsense, and in no way reflects "real world" military actions.

Yet, in F&E, that's what happens. 50FFs and a DN block 51 CAs every single time. No dice, no odds, no ifs ands or buts ... every single time.

They fire one shot, and run ... and this somehow blocks a six month campaign of dedicated aggression?
For those who think pinning makes sense, I submit that perhaps ... and only perhaps ... in a closed front on a 2D battlefield, there may be justification for this kind of thing to reflect stopping an armour column to wait for engineers to come up to clear a minefield, during which time snipers can bog down the column, and so on.

But what do they do for day two of the campaign, if they're that unwilling to engage?

Furthermore, if the attacker has enough air cover to airstrike the minefield so as not to slow the advance, or are simply willing to take their losses and roll on through, or happen to have combat engineers attached ... then what?

And all of this makes the supposition that the enemy was able to predict your movements with enough foresight as to install such defences there. IE: This only works when you have terrain features to exploit to force the other side's movements down certain paths. Otherwise, they could come from anywhere.

Now, once you open up the scene to three dimensions, you've got an awful mess on your hands. If someone is willing to go hot and fast and burn on through, how can you stop them? Imagine the task of trying to stop an SR71 before it crosses the atlantic. Certainly you can use missile sites and such to engage it when it enters your airspace, but how do you "pin it out" over the atlantic? And yes, I DO think that's what pinning out a fast ship would entail.

So how does pinning make sense in SFB? Look again at the scale of F&E ... look at how big those hexes are. Any terrain in those hexes is lost in the noise. The size of that hex compared to the required clearance to navigate a starship is so massive, that it's like saying: "here's a baseball bat, they're sneaking through the solar system ... setup wherever you like."

Add to that these are not Star Wars interdictor cruisers we're talking about here. How do you bat that ship out of high warp, even if you CAN find it? And finding it is a pretty big if, with that much space and a six-month turn to pick your window in. If you just put a dozen guys with sniper rifles at the side of the road, the armour column is never going to notice them, much less stop for them.

No, perhaps in a tactical game that deals with infantry and armour movements, I might be willing to buy that notion, but in a space combat game, without some kind of "warp inhibitor", I just can't see it. Space is simply too big. The attacker should be able to get to their target every time, and find some kind of ambush waiting for them. The defender should be able to set up all kinds of nasty surprises for the attacker at the target, but I don't see how they keep the attacker out of the hex.
At best, an "ambushing" force in a forward hex could conceivably wreck the supply train of such a force, but what would such a supply train entail? Ships routinely carry large amounts of supplies on hand, and can even do a fair amount of repair with what they have aboard. For an assault that may last 10 minutes, they can't possibly need a convoy of freighters. Oh, and yes, that IS how long such an assault would take ... maybe half an hour for a massive starbase/planetary assault. One SFB round is a minute. How many rounds is that fight really going to take before one side pulls out?

Besides, my problem with pinning is not so much in that it makes no sense, as in that it leads to problems in gameplay.

It promotes cheese, such as building massive fleets of garbage that never fire a shot, so that we can compare how much garbage each side has, and the one with the most garbage wins.

It leads to massive fleets which have unwieldy counter stack sizes, which slow the game down for no net gain.

The defender has an advantage already: they can react to the attack, and get the benefits of defences over and above the "ships of the line".

If you're concerned with the ability to build foreward elements in enemy territory while being immune to counter-offensive because you have more FFs than they have, I submit you should be. It's boring and senseless. You have a perfectly good approach battle to defend with, and if they get through that, you have the opportunity to pack your line to the teeth, knowing where they will direct.

That's exciting space combat. That's good value gameplay. "Is it worth the punishment to nail that target, I'm running out of ships fast" is a lot more interesting question for the defender than "Oh, he has frigates, and frigates trump dreadnoughts"

Because right now they do. If your fleets are equal in size, and you have a good line or two in there somewhere, you're better off building three frigates (14.5ep) than a dreadnought (16ep), since if you can't get to your targets, you can pack up your counters and go home, the war is lost. The Klingons should not WANT to bring back the E3, regardless how cheap it would be to overproduce.

Telling the Hydrans "I have 50 e4s here, you have 40 ships in your empire, you can go home now, your empire out is of the game." is just plain bad gameplay. It's boring.

Yes, I'm well aware that forcing "pinning" elements to fight would change the
game. I, however, don't see that as a bad thing.

Dale,

You are not thinking it through.

The objective of a province holder is to hold a province. If the Coalition reacts out of the province to try and pin a fighter-strike CV stack, it is a mission kill.

You also miss the implications of this tactic with raids and drone/CV special raids as preliminary softening up by pulling province holders out of supporting positions or by crippling them.

Crippled province holding frigates have no reaction move. Thus they are fighter-strike meat.

Fighter-strikes also puts a big kink in the Coalition small scout cover force tactic if the FF reacts out of the two hex range reaction of the small scout.

Besides, who says the whole CV fighter-strike force has to show up at once.

Example:

A Kzinti CVE, a Pol-CV and a Pol approach a F5+E4 stack. They react out of the hex they are in to pin the CV fighter-strike group. The Kzinti use the CVE's command rating to pull the CVE and Pol-CV out of the pin and then fighter-strike back into the hex, pinning both Klingon ships. Then another Kzinti fighter-strike group shows up and adds more fighters from the adjacent hex to take it off the SSC table (9*1.5 = 13.5, AKA 14 compot or higher) so the only way to avoid attritional losses is to commit a reserve.

If Kzinti player is still keeping all Kzinti CVS together in strike fleets that are hitting higher priority targets, like FRD parks etc, those Coalition reserves will be very busy else where.

The Kzinti have not much ability to hit garrisons with standard raids. Their best likely ship is likely the DNL. Versus the F5+E4 above, the Kzinti only get a +1. If the Klingons react over a little F5S, the DNL gets a -1. If I were the Klingons I'd put one F5S in each cluster of six ships. Sure you may raid two adjacent provinces and have a good chance in one, but the other battle will see good odds killing your fast dreadnought. I wouldn't risk a Z-DNL even with a PT verses that stack because that would be even odds and I don't fight at even odds. Drone raids won't be that effective on garrison ships. A single SDF needs a 37.5% to cripple a 4pt FF. That's a 1/3 chance at BIR=7. Admittedly that is only a 20.0%
with two drone ships. But then you are spending 0.8 EP to cripple an enemy FF that repairs for 1 EP. You'd better kill the ff later or the economics are unfavorable. A fighter raid (6 factors for a long while) uses up a CV (or more likely the DDV) and only cripples a 4pt FF on a 25%. A CVL needs a 37.5% to cripple the FF (same as the single ship drone raid). The CVE and PV have no chance period. So I don't think that softening raids will tend to do much. A good fighter raider would be DDV+CLE as that ought to do well verses any garrison force that manages to intercept them.

Now, I must say that I love your idea of POL escorts (not in the carrier sense). As long as you are within three hexes of your hardpoint, the POL can escort the carriers to the launch hex (because the POL can't enter a hex with more than one enemy ship). If the garrison reacts, your POL gets in the action. If the garrison doesn't, you strike with the fighters and then have the POL move back to your hardpoint. Something to remember, however, is that a force of only fighters has a CR of 3 (303.7) so unless the garrison is solely composed of K-E4 and L-FF hulls, the Coalition will still be able to react out by (203.55).

[Edit: I'm honestly not trying to nit-pick but the example given needs to be slightly reworked. Because the F5 has a CR of 4, the CVE (CR6) can only pull out two SE and the CVE+PV is three.]

By Christopher E. Fant (Cfant) on Saturday, May 07, 2005 - 06:53 am: Edit

Kevin, that would be War to End all Wars....Part 42.

As for the pinning thing(again). The system works fine. Were it to change, I would wager a lot of people would quit playing, not all of course. Its easy and covers the broad scope of the game. A crusier cannot advance if FFs are harrying their supply lines, and that is what pinning breaks down to in a grand strategy game.

I would not mind seeing some oddball things in Stellar Shadows, but leave the game itself alone. The system is not broken, as that fleet of FFs that can pin you out is never, ever going to get anywhere on the offensive, and will eventually get worn away losing 3 or 4 ships per engagement.

By John Doucette (Jkd) on Saturday, May 07, 2005 - 10:25 am: Edit

What about a Coalition player who uses non-standard garrisons (i.e. 1 sqn/province)? That might put a crimp in Raiding as a means to strike garrisons.

By Dale Lloyd Fields (Dylkha) on Saturday, May 07, 2005 - 01:38 pm: Edit

Paul Howard had an excellent TacNote in CL27 (Who's Affraid of the Big Bad Raid) detailing what the Coalition can do against standard raids with only two defending frigates. That's the basis for what I was writing about. In addition, Kzinti space has several triple points (three provinces touching) that two garrison frigates can be put in each (one ship to react over, another to keep the province).
Two ships each in 0802-0902-0903, 1103-1104-1203, and 1403-1503-1504 would seem to be workable. I guess that still leaves Zamyan and Zelkrat (1001 & 1105) that have to have a couple garrisons as well. The nice thing is that an F5S in either of the nearby triple points can react to a raid against either of those planets. I'm guessing that Zimdars (1202) will likely have a strong fleet on it as well as Lumien or Kindlai (1502 or 1504). Such a setup will make the province garrisons immune to standard raiders. Now, you can certainly raid the provinces themselves with such a setup. What I've learned from other members on this board is that the killing of garrisons in Kzinti space has to be done during the normal combat phase. Fleets in the OffMap and/or on the Marquis' SB would greatly complicate the setup given above.

3x FFs with a Scout or 2 in the mix have become my standard province holding force since raids were introduced.

We've been using squadrons since day one, way back in the midst of pre-history. The tacnote about leaving single ships close to each other to react was interesting, but not worthy of a tacnote in my opinion, unless as an example of what not to do.

I've had these for a while, and I figure other people have already figured this out, but I figured I would post some of my write ups on colony locations. If other people have figured out a better colony packing, please tell me.

On-Map colony optimization for the Four Powers.

Lyrians: 18 On-Map Possible
The Lyrians have their empire divided in two, in terms of colony locations. Their possible colony locations in the north are north of the following hexes inclusive: 0104, 0203, 0304, 0405, 0506, 0605, and hex 0706 (don't forget the WYN have planets). The possible colony locations in the south are south of the following hexes inclusive: 0107, 0208, 0310, 0410, 0511. I can fit 10 colonies in the north and 8 in the south. The positions I use are:

Klingons: 22 On-Map possible
The Klingons have a more complicated colony set-up. Their space is broken up into many little pockets. If you disqualify the Vudar enclave as possible locations for colonies you get seven separate locations.
The SR: 1615, 1716, 1717.
The South: 1918, 2017, 2118, 2218, 2318, 2319, 2419.
North Fed Pocket: 1811, 1812.
Tholian Pocket: 2416.

I get 22 colonies by the following locations:
North - 0906, 0908, 1107, 1109, 1309, 1510, 1608, 1707, 1710, 1808
Hydran - 1114, 1314, 1415
Southern Reserve - 1615, 1717
South - 1918, 2118, 2318, 2419
North Fed Pocket - Either 1811 or 1812
South Fed Pocket - Either 1914 or 2014
Tholian Pocket - 2416
Note that the 1510 location can be done by the Home Fleet TGA.

Of course these would never be used, but...

Hydran: 11 On-Map possible
The Hydrans have one northeast region, a west region and a single one-hex pocket. Again, not including Vudar provinces.
NE region: the parallelogram with vertices 0515, 0714, 0816 & 1015, with the exception of hex 1015 itself.
West region: rows 01xx, 02xx, and hexes 0315, 0318 & 0310.
Pocket: 0819.
My colony locations are:
NE - 0615, 0714, 0816, 0915
West - 0114, 0116, 0119, 0217, 0315, 0319
Pocket - 0819

Kzinti: 8 On-Map possible
The Kzinti are simply screwed. On the plus side, they have lots of planets already. On the minus side, they have Zursk (1506) killing off two otherwise usable colony locations. The Kzinti have five regions:
West: Row 07xx, 0801, 1802, 0903, 1002
Duke: 1304, 1305
Marquis: 1704, 1705, 1804, 1805
North Pocket: 1701,
Fed Pocket: 1901, 2001
The locations I have for colonies are:
West: 0701, 0802, 1003
Duke: 1304
Marquis: 1704, 1805
North Pocket: 1701
Fed Pocket: Either 1901 or 2001

I note that the Federation and Romulans have way more spots than either can
economically exploit with actual colonies. The Federation is nice because it has that safe area near the 2nd and 5th Fleet zones. The Roms have bunches to the south. Of note should be hexes 4214 and 4315 in which the North Fleet 3FE can start setting up a colony on T10. The Gorn? Lots of sites as well, many of 'em away from the Romulan border.

Again, in the interest of accuracy if someone has better packing, please post it. One of these days I'll be motivated to do the full-bore Fed/Rom/Gorn.

By David Slatter (Davidas) On Monday, May 16, 2005 - 05:01 am: Edit

I really don't think that colonies will be planted to this kind of density. Besides, many of those locations would be vulnerable. Still, I guess it will be nice for the coalition to win and rub salt in the wounds....

By Dale Lloyd Fields (Dylkha) On Monday, May 16, 2005 - 12:10 pm: Edit

Right. That's why I still listed the Hydrans and Kzinti even though they will (or rather should) never put down an On-Map colony. Still, the Lyran should be able to put down all but a few of theirs as the front lines in the GW should be in Kzinti space. Raids from the Hydrans should mean some of southern Lyran space is vulnerable. Most of northern Klingon space is probably vulnerable. But the Klingons certainly have the 2xSR colonies, most of the south corridor, the Hydran border pocket and the two Fed border pockets. Personally, I wouldn't build up either of the two near Tholian space (2416, 2419) because the Tholian fleet will come out and smack 'em down on turn twenty-(two?). But the purpose of the exercise was to be comprehensive. I guess another way to describe colony placement is to list defensible colony locations.

By Mark Ermenc (Mermenc) On Monday, May 16, 2005 - 03:00 pm: Edit

If I recall the rules correctly, a colony could be put down in an unreleased fleet zone, thus there was a certain measure of sense in building a colony with the Marquis Starbase, so as to pack in two PDU there to further fortify the position, not as a money-making activity (Since you'll likely make less than you paid for just the colony), but as extra defences. (12 fighters to absorb 12 damage at the very least.) If nothing else, it's something else for the coalition to direct on while the starbase is wailing away on them.

There are limits to off-board colony production, so one might as well build this colony "while you're waiting".

By John Colacito (Sandro) On Sunday, June 26, 2005 - 10:57 pm: Edit

In case anyone is bored and looking for something to do I'm now soliciting advice for Lyran production in East Wind. In other words what would you build the first 8 turns at peacetime production; 57.5 EPs?

By Dave Butler (Dcbutler) On Monday, June 27, 2005 - 12:53 am: Edit

F168: BC, TGP (for CA), CL (for CW), 2xCW, DDG (for DW), DW, 3xFF, CA=>DNL, DD->CW = 57.5
**S169**: CC (for DN), CF (for CA), CL (for CW), 2xCW, DDG (for DW), DW, 3xFF, CL=>BC = 57.5

**F169**: same as F168

**S170**: STT (for DN), CF (for CA), CL (for CW), LTT (for CW), CW, DDG (for DW), 2xDW, FF, CL=>BC = 57.5 (if using PO, cancel CW and DDG builds to start building minor shipyards (Major Conversion, second is player's choice (CW?, minor conversion?))

**F170**: BC, TGP (for CA), CL (for CW), LTT (for CW), CW, DDG (for DW), DW, 3xFF, CA=>DNL, DD->CW = 57.5

**S171**: STT (for DN), TGP (for CA), CL (for CW), CVL (for CW), LTT (for CW), 2xFF, CA=>DNL =57.0 (cancel 2xFF and change CVL into conversion (canceling base hull) for shipyards)

**F171**: BC, CF (for CA), CL (for CW), STJ (for CW), DW, FCR (for FF), 2xFF, CL=>BC = 57.5 (with shipyards, substitute LTT for STJ, cancel DW and 2xFF, and spend 1 ep on a CW-CWE conversion)

**S172**: CV (for DN), CF (for CA), CL (for CW), STJ (for CW), DWG (for DW) FF, CL=>BC = 57.5 (shipyards confuse things, in theory I've got a second major conversion available, plus I could be building more 'yards)

From what I've read, it's okay that I haven't built escorts or scouts, since I can always take the initiative and go to Limited War to get the money to do conversions (2-step, mostly) to get those variants. My personal biases show up in the fast- and ground attack ships and no DNs; I feel bad about butchering my shipcount by paying full price for the fighters, but carriers are just so useful (and the CV will -- eventually -- grow into a SCS). Subbing the CL for the CW is a luxury I'm willing to splurge on given the assumption that I'll eventually have enough major conversions to go into BCs in a big way.

All this assumes that I'm free to spend the money how I like. It's possible to read the rules so that my only choice is which hulls of the schedule I **don't** build, in which case I build everything except a DW and a FF in the Spring, and build everything in the Fall.

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By [David Slatter (Davidas)] on Monday, June 27, 2005 - 12:54 pm: Edit

No shipyards IMHO.

**F168**
BC 4CW 3DW FF
CA->DN, 3DD->3SC, CA->CC

**S169**
TGC, JGP, 3CW, 3DW, FF
CA->DNL, 2DD->2SC, CA->CC, 2 JGP-G sets.

**F169**
BC 4CW 3DW FF
CA->DN, 3DD->3SC, CA->CC
S170
STT LTT 3CW 3DW FF
CA->DNL, 3DD->3SC, CA->CC

F170
BC STT LTT 3CW 2DW FF
Cl->BC, CA->CC

S171
STT LTT CVL 2CW DWE FF
CL->BC

F171
BC STT CWE 3CW DWE FF
CL->BC, DD->SC, CA->CC

S172
STT 2CWE CW CWS FF
Cl->BC, CA->CV

Once in the war, concentrate on getting out scout pods, CWS, and FCR while using fff for carriers. Pay for fighters if you can use more CVs. Don't bother with shipyards unless you think you will have plenty of spare money, in which case, Major conversion or frigate shipyard.

Possible that you may want to sub a couple more LTTs.

I don't think building DNs outright is wise with that money. Use BCs for big compot lines, lead by a DN.

Most of your CAs will be converted, but there are still plenty left for conversion, and you won't run out of CLs to convert.

By Tony Barnes (Tonyb) on Monday, June 27, 2005 - 02:45 pm: Edit

DAS,
On the STT, I think you can only sub 1 per year for the Lyrans.

By John Doucette (Jkd) on Thursday, June 30, 2005 - 09:41 am: Edit

David Slatter brought up an interesting point about non-fighter FDUs in the Q&A topic. I don't have PO and don't recall non-fighter FDUs being discussed (not that that means anything), but, presumably they can be built, since and FDU is just a PDU placed somewhere where the potential for action is greater (whee for the FDU lads). What should a non-fighter FDU be called? It can't be an FGB, since that's apparently already used in SFB, so how about FDB (Forward Defence Base)?
More importantly, would there be any value to deploying such a unit, presumably with the intention to add the fighters later (but perhaps not)? I could see deploying FDBs as a piquet line along a broad front. As David pointed out, each one provides 1 EW and 3 extra compot to any battle in the hex, making them better than a PT acting in the commando role. While they would lose their ability to interdict lines of communication and would not be able to pin, they could definitely act as sort of a firebase around which to conduct the defence of a province from enemy frigate operations. As well, even if they were not employed in such a fashion, FDBs would, at the very least, still serve to create a battle hex if attacked, allowing a reserve to be deployed to (one would hope) crush the pitifully small force eradicating the FDB.

I call the Tac Note on this one 😊

P.S. I can't remember if PFs can be stationed on FDUs or not.

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Fighterless FDU are allowed (explicitly stated in the rules); they don't get free PFs, but you can buy 1/2 a flotilla each (or station a CPF there); the big use I see would be for EWNs (PO-537.3).

---

You got the points John - those were some reasons why I would want to deploy a FDB (or whatever it's called).
You missed out one I thought was important though.

I missed the PF application. That would be quite cheap and nifty - much more cost-effective than fighters.

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Having done a more complete cross-referencing, I'm now reasonably certain that you can't put PFs on a fighterless FDU. Turns out that (AO-441.15) prohibits a PGB from having PFs, and I can't rationalize why a PGB would not be allowed PFs if it's on a planet with it being allowed PFs if it's floating on an asteroid somewhere in space. (Mind you, (441.15)'s wording is such that, if you haven't put fighters on to a PGB before you get PFs, you may never put PFs there, even if you upgrade it to a PDU some time after PF deployment. Probably not what was intended, but oh well.)

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I never referred to PFs on non-fighter FDUs, I was only wondering if PFs could be placed on FDUs.

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I figured as much, but what I wrote in answer to your question is phrased as if non-fighter FDU could have PFs (and, at the time, I thought the rules did allow
FDU with PFs but without fighters). I figured I'd better clarify what I wrote.

> Turns out that (AO-441.15) prohibits a PGB from having PFs, and I can't rationalize why a PGB would not be allowed PFs if it's on a planet with it being allowed PFs if it's floating on an asteroid somewhere in space.

The draft ISC scenario rules include PGB's with PFs.

Right--enough of the madness! Some actual game discussion!

So we just finished a game of Reptilicon Revenged, a nice, quick, fun scenario (we played the whole thing out in about 6 hours) which gives your Gorn and Romulan counters a good work out, gets a lot of mileage out of the cloaked movement rules, and sees a large percentage of both sides fleets get blown up (both sides lost upwards of 20 ships in the span of 3 turns of combat).

As I don't own whatever expansion the scenario is most recently published in (Planetary Operations?), we were using the CL10 original playtest version that was likely out of date to some extent. We also, rather than making the Romulans roll for their available "home fleet" forces, we just said that they got the 3-4 (middle) contingent, figuring that the benefits you got from rolling a 5-6 (a couple extra ships) did not outweigh the hosing you got for rolling a 1-2 (4 fewer ships and one less Reserve counter), and didn't want the outcome to be too hinged on a single die roll.

The game was certainly fun with a lot of crazy action, but our initial impression is that (at least in the CL10 playtest version) that Gorns can't possibly win in the face of competent Romulan play. They can certainly get a draw, which is what happened in our game--at the end of turn 3, the Gorns had more total active compot on the board, but the Romulans had killed 12 BATS where the Gorns had killed 1 Rom BATS and built a new BATS (so even with the Gorns having the bigger fleet, the Romulans were ahead 10 BATS), but assuming that the Romulans don't make huge outrageous errors, it seems highly unlikely that the Gorns could kill enough Romulan bases to score even a tactical victory (especially as the Gorns are likely going to lose a lot more total compot by killing all those bases, so they probably won't end up with a bigger fleet if they do kill all the bases, again, giving, at best, a draw again). The Romulans can probably score a marginal victory pretty easily, although a draw is perfectly possible in most situations, but we can't see how the Gorns can possibly score even a marginal victory (except, ya know, in the face of incredible Romulan incompetence).

A) Can anyone detail any significant changes between the original playtest
version of the scenario and the most recent version?

B) Is there anyone who has played the scenario multiple times, and has any experience in, like, the Gorns winning?

Thanks!
-Peter

By Kevin Howard (Jarawara) on Friday, August 26, 2005 - 04:28 pm: Edit

Actually, I've won with the Gorns, multiple times, though it's entirely possible that the Romulans did have an incompetent player, (especially when I was playing the game solitaire, so that I was both sides...)

Your comment that the Gorns cannot win in the face of "Competent Romulan play"... tell me what you think would be the winning Romulan strategy.

I'm thinking that the last time I played Reptilicon Revenged, I hadn't yet considered the mudslide tactic, and so the Romulans lost because they took too much damage going forward. The Gorns on the counteroffensive are frightening to behold, putting up more firepower in their battleforce than the Romulans can set up over the guns of their Battlestations. The Gorns do just enough to turn the BATS-kill ratio back to their favor, while also having the larger fleet, and viola, they pull a victory on Gorn turn 3.

So what are my Romulans doing wrong? Was it the Mudslide I should have been doing? And what did your Romulans do wrong, to not get the fleet firepower advantage? Should you have been killing ships when you were instead killing BATS? I like to pop those cruisers every single chance I get, and so I got a chance to have the larger firepower by the end of the scenario.

As for changes, other than a generel update, I'd like to see the "firepower advantage" to be scaled. After all, if you have killed 10 more BATS than your opponent, but your opponent has only 1 more point of firepower than you, it's a draw. That means, if you had been able to repair that one little SN frigate, your firepower would have gone up by two, giving you the firepower advantage, and suddenly you've got an astounding victory. I don't like the difference between a "Draw" and "Incredible Victory" to be the repairing of a SN frigate.

Perhaps if it were "For every X amount of firepower advantage one way or the other, it counts as if it were an additional BATS kill, for purposes of victory conditions.

But that doesn't address the balance issues, so it's your turn - tell us more of your game.

By Peter D Bakija (Bakija) on Saturday, August 27, 2005 - 02:27 am: Edit
Kevin wrote:
>>Your comment that the Gorns cannot win in the face of "Competent Romulan play"... tell me what you think would be the winning Romulan strategy.>>.

Well, it isn't so much that the Romulans have a walk over to win--just that I don't think the Gorns can score a victory. The general consensus between the two of us was that the most likely outcome in any event was a draw, although if the Romulans play conservatively on the last turn, they can probably pull off a marginal victory if the Gorns aren't real lucky.

>>The Gorns on the counteroffensive are frightening to behold, putting up more firepower in their battleforce than the Romulans can set up over the guns of their Battlestations.>>

The Gorns have the much denser ships, and the important BTs with the CR10. But the Romulans have more ships to start, a longer build schedule (9 vs 6), and more money allowing for more overbuilds. That, and with a few FAL and KRC conversions, they can make up some of the density they are behind. 'Cause the Roms have more ships, the Gorns can't really get a lot of use out of their CR10 and density--the Romulans tend to attack more targets than the Gorns can defend, meaning the Gorns have to spread out the ships, often fighting larger fleets of weaker ships that pretty much evened out.

The Gorns can't completely abandon their SB's, as if the Romulans can opportunistically attack a poorly defended SB and kill it, the Gorns are likely totally hosed, so they usually needed to sit some ships on the 2 SBs that mostly got pinned, so the Romulans would pin what they could and then attack as many BATS as possible. The Gorns, with probably 2 mid sized reserves, would probably save 1 target, maybe save another one that had some ships on it already, and then lost some BATS.

>>So what are my Romulans doing wrong? Was it the Mudslide I should have been doing?>>

I don't know. Were the Romulans fighting the fights that were even or disadvantageous? Were they not pinning the Gorns? Were they staying in Gorn space each turn, or falling back to defend the BATSs?

>>But that doesn't address the balance issues, so it's your turn - tell us more of your game. >>

T1: Romulans set up as north as possible. Gorns set up with about a 6 ship reserve on one of the SBs, a few squads of 2 or 3 ships on a couple border BATS, and a good reserve at the Capital. Romulans pinned the reserve on the SB and attacked 5 or 6 BATS and killed 3 or 4 of them. We both directed the biggest thing we could in each battle round as often as possible. The Romulans got tooled
at the BATS that the Gorns sent the Home reserve to, but only for one round and then retreated. The Romulans pulles every ship they had out of Gorn space and protected their BATS. The Gorns moved a new tug to set up a MB, and rushed across the border, directing one BATS as they could really only get to the one due to pinning hordes. The retrograded back to the SB's and to protect the MB being set up.

T2: Romulans flooded Gorn space to the East, as the MB and protecting ships were to the west, attacking as many BATS as possible and pinning the ships at the eastern SB. The Gorns had a couple small reserves that went various places and saved a BATS or two, but the Romulans managed to kill another 3 or 4 BATS. They then retrograded most of their ships back to Romulan space, but left a few small squads in northern Gorn space. The Gorns paid to upgrade the MB to a BATS, attacked various Romulan groups, but didn't attack any BATS in Romulan space, as they had enough ships to pin most Gorns trying to get to BATSs.

T3: The Romulans went berzerk, again, attacking as many BATS as possible, including attacking the MB>BATS upgrade, but getting pinned out of the hex. The Gorns could have saved one BATS with both the reserves, but realized that being too far behind in BATSs at this point, the only hope was to kill more Romulan ships and force a draw, so the Gorns spread out ships to do more damage. The Romulans blew up a few more BATS and retrograde most of their ships back to the Romulan BATS, but had to leave about a dozen ships stranded in th north of Gorn space, as they were too far forward to retrograde (but in supply due to a supply tug). On the Gorn turn, they were behind, 9 BATS (Romulans had killed 11, Gorns had killed 1 and built 1) and had no possibility of killing the 5 needed to be able to score any victory at all, so they moved to kill the Romulan ships stranded in the North, picking a few off, and calling a draw when the turn ended with the Gorns having more total compot, but behind 9 BATS.

So by taking full advantage of their numerical superiority, the Romulans could spread out, attack more targets than the Gorns could defend while pinning anything protecting the SBs, and then retrograde back to their bases to protect them from counter attack. The Gorns, with a considerably smaller number of ships, could focus and bust through to 1 or 2 Romulan BATSS a turn if they tried really hard, but took a lot of damage in blowing up the BATS.

Again, I don't think the Romulans have, by any means, a walk over victory (in post game analysis, we figured that if the Romulans were very conservative on T3, the probably could have squeezed by a marginal victory instead of going for the gutsy decisive victory but failing due to taking too much ship damage in the process), but the Gorns seem hard pressed to score anything other than a draw.

-Peter
Peter,

A disclaimer before I begin - I am going focus on a couple of minor points, but I have to state up front that these are only minor points and does nothing to counter your description of the basic strategy. Indeed, with Reptilicon Revenged, you have to win the war with the fleets you start with, not with the fleets you build, so if build strategies were different, the basic war strategy is changed only a little.

With that said...

"Romulans have more ships to start, a longer build schedule (9 vs 6), and more money allowing for more overbuilds."

I find they have less money for overbuilds, since they spend more on their 9 ships than does the Gorns on their 6, and often have higher repair bills. Plus, overbuilding a SN cost 6 for a 4 point ship, overbuilding a DD is the same 6 for a 5 point ship. It adds up, though it doesn't save the early BATS.

"That, and with a few FAL and KRC conversions, they can make up some of the density they are behind."

Two points to consider: One, I'm using the scenario as written in Marine Assault, I don't think it's been updated since then, or if it's different from the Cap Log version. Two, it was written back before F&E2K, and so you have to use some earlier rules, or the scenario will be broken, IMO.

With those points in mind, we look at the Romulan Production and Conversion capacity. They can build one FAL per turn, as a sub for the WE. They can convert one per turn, as their major conversion. Before F&E2K, there was only one major conversion for the Romulans, so that's it, only two FAL per turn. Even on turn 3, when you get access to the SPF, it's still not listed as a possible substitution, and so it would still take the major conversion to build. Assuming the middle roll (3-4) for the ships available from the home fleet, that's 1 FAL to start, 2 per turn, 7 total maximum. And at 26 points to kill, I don't think you'll ever get that many.

As for the KRC conversions... from what? A KRC is converted from the K7R, on the Fed border. The KR cruiser has no useful conversion, no CV version available, no scout version available, a KRM mauler version, but that takes up one of your FAL conversion slots, so no real benefit there. And with the average selection of ships from the home fleet, you only ever get one KRC. That's two CR10 ships available for the Gorns, more if replacements are needed, vs only *one* CR9 rating ship for the Romulans. If the KRC gets killed, they're down to CR8 for the rest of the game.

"Because the Roms have more ships, the Gorns can't really get a lot of use out of
their CR10 and density--the Romulans tend to attack more targets than the Gorns can defend, meaning the Gorns have to spread out the ships, often fighting larger fleets of weaker ships that pretty much evened out."

I tend to concentrate the Gorns more, to get use out of those CR10 ships, even if for only one round. Spreading out just makes you play the Roms game even more. However, I'm not sure if I can prove this, so I will reserve judgement until I go play again. At least on the attack, make those stacks count.

Now as for the rest of your analysis, I cannot comment, as it's been quite awhile since I've played it. And as I pointed out, changes to F&E2K will change the balance, so it needs to be updated. Another point to support your thesis - nearly anyone who has ever played Reptilicon Revenged out beyond turn 3, turning it into a long term fight of the two nations, reports that the Romulans kick the Gorns ass with great gusto. But that's a function of the benefits of the GW era Romulans. For those three turns, they are just too thin of good ships to stand up in a fight. Classic case of more vs. better, and in my experiences, he who uses their advantage best, wins.

I'll have to go play it again, to reassess, to see what you are saying.

Kevin wrote:

>>I find they have less money for overbuilds, since they spend more on their 9 ships than does the Gorns on their 6, and often have higher repair bills.>>

Huh. The Roms build WE, 3BH, 5SN for 36; the Gorns build BC, 2CL, 3DD for 35, which is a wash. The Romulans start with 10 more EPs a turn. The Romulans had higher repair bills, but not so much that, like it was bankrupting them--if both sides spend the same on construction (lets say schedule plus 4 overbuilt FFs), the Romulans are getting 13 hulls a turn, the Gorns are getting 10 hulls a turn, and the Romulans still have the extra money for the extra repairs.

>> Plus, overbuilding a SN cost 6 for a 4 point ship, overbuilding a DD is the same 6 for a 5 point ship. It adds up, though it doesn't save the early BATS.>>

Sure, sure--the Gorns have much better ships for the whole game (well, the last turn SpH/Sky certainly help the Roms, but not that much), but the Romulans have a lot more ships--41 (using the 3-4 release of home fleet) to 27 at the start, and the Roms build 3 more a turn, and get a slight edge on direct killing with the maulers.

>>Two points to consider: One, I'm using the scenario as written in Marine Assault, I don't think it's been updated since then, or if it's different from the Cap Log version. Two, it was written back before F&E2K, and so you have to use some
earlier rules, or the scenario will be broken, IMO.>>

Very possible. The KRC and FAL conversions are allowed in the CL version. On the other hand, the Romulans got an extra free major conversion in 2K, which saved them 5 EPs a turn (as they did 2 majors a turn--either 2xFAL or FAL and KRC). The Gorns in 2K got the free "ground assault" rule (at the end of every battle round vs a planet or base, roll 2 dice and on, what, a 9+ you get to score a free SIDS) which theoretically helps them, but never actually came up. So it might be a wash, but I think the free second conversion helps the Roms much more than the free ground attack helps the Gorns.

>>Assuming the middle roll (3-4) for the ships available from the home fleet, that's 1 FAL to start, 2 per turn, 7 total maximum. And at 26 points to kill, I don't think you'll ever get that many.>>

Oh, they don't get many. They start with the 1 FAL and 1 KRC, and they make 2 of either FAL or KRC a turn. It isn't a huge benefit, but it certainly helps, especially when the ship numbers are taken into account.

>>As for the KRC conversions... from what? A KRC is converted from the K7R, on the Fed border.>>

The scenario I have (CL10) the KR>K7R for 5 points and a K7R>KRC for 2 points--the KR in the home fleet becomes a K7R on T1 and then becomes a KRC at a north SB on T2. Those might have been changed somewhere along the line.

>>And with the average selection of ships from the home fleet, you only ever get one KRC. That's two CR10 ships available for the Gorns, more if replacements are needed, vs only *one* CR9 rating ship for the Romulans. If the KRC gets killed, they're down to CR8 for the rest of the game.>>

Sure--they had CR8 in most of their fights. But most of the fights tended to be 5 or 6 dense Gorn ships vs 8 or 9 diffuse Rom ships, which was kind of a wash. The Gorns always had at least one major battle group (BT, a few BCs, a few CLs, a swarm of DDs) each turn, and it totally massacred whataver it fought with but on T1 it killed a BATS (taking longer than it should have due to some bad dice) and lost more ships than it killed, T2 it fought a lot of Romulans in open space (getting pinned, mostly--the BT could have CRed its way to victory and attacked something on its own, but that seemed, ya know not a good idea) killing a bunch, but not so many that its own losses were insignificant; T3 it didn't really attack anything significant as the forcing of a draw was only the good option.

>>I tend to concentrate the Gorns more, to get use out of those CR10 ships, even if for only one round.>>

Sure, but if you concentrate too much, the Roms can kill BATS even easier--in the
Gorn turns, you can concentrate forces to fight, which might get a few BATS kills, but on the defensive portion of the turn, the Gorns need to spread their ships around, of the Roms can kill the undefended BATS with, like, 3 ships (keeping in mind that the Gorn BATS, at least in the CL10 scenario, have no fighters).

>> Spreading out just makes you play the Roms game even more. However, I'm not sure if I can prove this, so I will reserve judgement until I go play again. At least on the attack, make those stacks count.>>

Oh, sure--in at least 1 hex a turn, the Gorns were monsters. When I attacked a BATS with a command point:

R1: Approach--I shot up a bunch of hulls, directing something small, the Roms directed a DD crippled a couple more DDs.
R2: Over BATS--Rom compot was not that much less than Gorns due to the extra 18 from the BATS and fighters. I roll bad (probably due to lucky cloak shift) and don't do 24 damage to direct the base. I direct something small and let the rest fall, the Roms do the same.
R3: Over BATS--Rom compot is dwindling, but Gorns no longer have a full battle line (due to vaporized DDs). I roll well, cripple the base. Roms blow up another ship.
R4: Over BATS--I vaporize the BATS, Roms blow up another DD. He retreats, I pursue, blow up a couple SN or something.

Like yeah, the force was scary, and I crippled a lot of Roms, but I lost, like, 4DDs and got a bunch of stuff crippled too. Fighting too many of these results in way too many ships getting lost in exchange for a few more BATS, which may or may not actually help the Gorns win.

And as I pointed out, changes to F&E2K will change the balance, so it needs to be updated.>>

Very likely.

>> Another point to support your thesis - nearly anyone who has ever played Reptilicon Revenged out beyond turn 3, turning it into a long term fight of the two nations, reports that the Romulans kick the Gorns ass with great gusto.>>

I can imagine.

>>I'll have to go play it again, to reassess, to see what you are saying.>>

Try it out and let me know--I might set it up and play it out solo again, just to see what happens.

-Peter
Peter,

I must ask why on R2 of your description you directed on anything at all. I am presuming by small you are talking about a Snipe. It cost 12 to direct. That would could have been 3 Snipes crippled for the same about of compot loss and taken 2 more ships out of the Romulans next turn offensive.

Russell wrote:
>>I must ask why on R2 of your description you directed on anything at all. I am presuming by small you are talking about a Snipe.>>

Honestly, I don't remember--I suspect I directed something small, as that was the general plan (to reduce long term compot--I didn't direct anything on T3, as the Romulans didn't get to repair anything before counting for victory, but on T1 and T2, it was directarama), but might not of. In any case, it likely didn't make that much of a difference--the Romulans didn't do enough damage to put a dent in the forces, other than the vaporized DDs every round. Most of my ships that were crippled got repaired by field repair at the end of the turn, and most of the Romulans in the battle got crippled anyway.

>> It cost 12 to direct. That would could have been 3 Snipes crippled for the same about of compot loss and taken 2 more ships out of the Romulans next turn offensive>>

All the ships crippled were taken out of the next turns offensive, as they weren't on a repair point. However, in the long run, all the cripples got repaired by the end of the game--crippling 3 snipes instead of vaporizing 1 might have save a few points of insignificant damage at the time, and might have kept a couple extra ships out of the fight on the next turn, but would have left him with 4 more total compot at the end of the game. At the time, it seemed more prudent to blow things up when possible.

-Peter

Kevin Howard wrote:
You attacked the BATS, directing on it. Why?

I set up Admiral Rex's Flying Circus, complete with command point, then let the damage fall. You used 24 damage to direct cripple the BATS, while with my letting it fall, it either cripples 4-6 ships, or completely and utterly kills the BATS (12 to cripple, 6 to kill, 6 more for fighters).

Now if I had scored 26 damage, I might have taken the time to kill the FAL, but one could even argue that I should let them take the damage then. I'll let others...
argue that point - for myself, the only good FAL is a dead FAL.

This is still just nitpicking, and doesn't change the overall picture; I still need to replay the scenario again. Disclaimer: When I play it next, it will be the MA scenario, as written, using that set of rules. No extra Romulan major conversion, no updated F&E2K rules. 2K will break the balance, and I'm curious about the original balance, so there's no sense in going there.

As for the updated scenario, I'm not sure where to begin to update it, as the balance will have to be looked at seriously, due to rule updates and improvements in the Romulan fleet. But I'm not going to look at that right now.

By Peter D Bakija (Bakija) on Saturday, August 27, 2005 - 10:14 pm: Edit

Kevin wrote:
>>You attacked the BATS, directing on it. Why?>>

'Cause he had a lot more ships than me--I had, like, 13 or 14 total ships in the hex, of which at least half were DDs. He had about 20 ships in the hex, including a FAL and some KR's. While fighting over the BATS (with fighters, and then some extra fighters from the BATS next door), his compot wasn't that much lower than mine, and he was blowing my DDs out of the line--by the third battle round, I had not a full battle round that was including 3 or 4 crippled DDs. He probably could have fought over the BATS for a few more rounds, and I would have lost more ships, which he would have killed the BATS, sure, but leaving me with even fewer hulls. It seemed reasonable to direct the thing to drop his compot a lot--more than the 24 damage would have dropped it.

-Peter

By Kevin Howard (Jarawara) on Sunday, August 28, 2005 - 04:06 am: Edit

Oh!!! OK, I was under the impression you were grinding him up, with a fleet of equal ships (only locally, for sure). If he outnumbered you by alot, then yes, directing the BATS is the only way to kill it.

I'm surprised he didn't stay and fight, force you to retreat, and kill your ships in the pursuit. Maybe he couldn't, with the loss of the BATS's firepower. Or he just made a mistake, so you can take the advantage he gave you, and be happy.

By Peter D Bakija (Bakija) on Sunday, August 28, 2005 - 09:56 am: Edit

Kevin wrote:
>>I'm surprised he didn't stay and fight, force you to retreat, and kill your ships in the pursuit. Maybe he couldn't, with the loss of the BATS's firepower. Or he just made a mistake, so you can take the advantage he gave you, and be happy.>>

Yeah--he had more ships, but smaller ships, so he probably could have sustained a few more rounds over the BATS with a reasonable compot without me directing it, and I was losing ships faster than him.
I think the Gorn force was something like BT, CC, 2xBC, 3xCL, 6xDD, SC (maybe 2xSC). He had something like FAL, KRC, 2KR, and then a lot of WE and SN (like 8 of each or something)--he had a force there (there were a bunch of ships on every BATS), a force from the neighboring BATS reacted, and his reserves went there. 1st round, he directs a DD and cripples a few DDs, and I direct something (I'm thinking it was a KR, as I think I was just shy of the FAL, and killing a KR saves me from compot in the battle and the long run). 2nd round, his compot is down 4 (KR replaced by SN) but up 18 (BATS). I'm like BT, CC, 2xBC, 3xCL, 3xDD, 2xcrippled DD, SC. I fail to hit 24 and either just hand him the damage, or vaporize a SN and let him take the rest (crippling a few more snipes). He blows up another DD and probably cripples another or two--I think his FAL breaks down too. R3 I roll up and do, like, 35 damage or something, crippling the BATS and a few more ships. He blows up another DD. R4 I do enough damage to vaporize the BATS and cripple a few more ships, and he retreats.

-Peter

OK, I'm going to try to recreate the battle, based on what you remember of it. You tell me if I was close.

Total Forces:

Gorn: BT, CC, 2xBC, 3xCL, 6xDD, SC. A second SC?

Romulan: KRC, 2xKR, 8xWE, 8xSN, FAL, BATS w/Ftrs.

Round 1, Approach.

Gorn: Uses full line, command point, battlegroup?, SC in scout box, BT in formation.
Firepower: 91, 96 with battlegroup. 1 EW.

Romulan: No command point listed, no scout listed. Line of KRC, 2xKR, FAL, 6 WE. KRC in formation.
Firepower: 72, 0 EW.

Roms are just trying to soften you up, to keep you from the base. First round, he scores 18 damage (25%), kills DD and cripples two more. You score 24-25 (at least to kill the KR, but not enough for the FAL).

2nd round, your firepower is now at 87, all ships committed, two crippled, BT is formation, SC in scout slot, no battlegroup required. Rom replaces KR with WE, now fighting over BATS, firepower 88 (or 86, see below), 1 EW.
This round, you fail to hit 24 points - let's assume 22 (25%). You direct on a SN. Hmm, I didn't include a SN on his line. A common practice on my part is to include one smaller ship on the line, to take excess damage, so let's assume that last WE was a SN. Then the 10 damage cripples two WE, with 2 minus points (countered by a possible plus point from round 1).

He scores enough to kill a DD, cripple one or two more. Let's assume two, making it 18+ damage again, 22.5% of his 86 (for 19). One plus point. His FAL shocks.

Round 3: Your line drops further in firepower, with 2 missing DD and the other 4 crippled. Your scout goes onto the line, to dare him into directing, and for the two extra firepower. BT stays in formation, just in case, though an argument could be made to reverse that, and dare him into directing on the BT while protecting the SC. Firepower: 80, 1 EW.

Roms have a line of KRC, KR, 6xWE, 2xSN, plus BATS. Firepower: 80, 1 EW.

You score 35, which technically is not possible (42.5% scores 34, 45% scores 36), so there's obviously a slight variation in the recreation of this battle. Or perhaps that's the leftover minus points, taking your 36 down to 35. He doesn't score as high, but if you're scoring in the 40%+ range, he's not going to be light on this either.

You direct 24 damage on his BATS, 8 scored to cripple the two SN, 3 on fighters.

His is harder to recreate. He kills a DD by directed damage. Hmm... by my assumptions, you didn't have any more uncrippled DD's left, and even if you did, why would he waste 16 damage killing something that he could kill with 6 damage (previously crippled). Even if he scored the worst possible damage, (BIR 9, you rolled a 6 to score your 45%, he rolled a 1 to score 32.5%), that's still 26, plus the leftover point from last turn. 6 is used to kill the [DD], you have 21 to eat. 2 CL and the SC are crippled.

Round 4:

Your line is BT, CC, 2xBC, CL, 2x[CL], 3x[DD].
Firepower: 67, no EW.
Rom's line is KRC, KR, 6xWE, 2xSN, [BATS], 3 Ftrs.
Firepower: 71, 1 EW.

Note, you had stated you might have had a second SC, so you might have 1 EW and two more firepower here.

Unknown what happened in this round - you scored enough to kill the BATS, only 12 required, plus you crippled a "few more ships". Let's assume you scored 35%, 23 damage - 12 to kill the BATS, 3 on Ftrs, 8 to cripple 2 more SN. He surely
didn't score the lowest possible roll again, but if he did, he still scored 22.5%, 16 points, killed a [DD] (should have killed the [CL], but maybe you had only one on the line, in formation), and then let the 10 drop, crippling a BC.

Had he rolled better in either or both of those last two rounds, he would have massacred you. He retreated, you killed some [SN]'s in pursuit. As it was, he should have stood and fought, forced you to retreat, and killed a couple of targets of his own.

*~*~*

Is this a reasonable reconstruction of the battle, or did it go differently?

But of course, where I'm leading with this, is "what if" you didn't direct...

*~*~*

Same battle, your strategy redone:

Round 1, your firepower 91, 96 with battlegroup, 1 EW. His line was 72, no EW. You scored 24-25, he scored 18. He kills a DD, cripples two more, you do not direct, and cripple 4 WE.

Round 2, at the BATS:

Your fleet is fully committed, no battlegroup required, your firepower 87, 1 EW.

His line is a KRC, 2xKR, FAL, 4xWE, 2xSN, BATS w/Ftrs. 86, 1 EW.

You scored an assumed 22, one extra point remaining from last round. He scored an assumed 19. He kills another DD, cripples two more, one plus point for next round. You let yours fall - 2 IDS steps on the BATS, 2 SN, 1 WE crippled, 1 Ftr. His FAL shocks.

Round 3:

Your line is now BT, CC, 2xBC, 3xCL, 4x[DD], SC.
Firepower: 80, 1 EW.

Rom's line is KRC, 2xKR, 3xWE, 4xSN, BATS w/5 Ftrs.
Firepower: 77, 1 EW.

Note: If you were using battlegroups, I would have replaced on WE with 2xSN to make a battlegroup, adding 2 firepower.

We had presumed in the above example (which was only a plausible recreation,
based on my faulty intel from reading into your posts), that to score the 35 damage, you must have had BIR 9, rolled a 6, and scored 36 with a minus point. No minus points in this replay. We also assumed that the only way you could have done as well as you did is if he rolled spectacularly low, at BIR 9, which is 32.5%, or 26 damage, plus the remaining point from last round. His firepower is slightly lower this time around, so he scores only 25, plus the carryforward point. We'll assume he had the two extra firepower from having a battlegroup, and keep it at 27 damage total.

He kills the crippled DD as before, you eat the rest, the same 2 CL and SC are crippled. You let him eat the whole amount himself, all 36 points. He is unwilling to lose the BATS, so here goes...

4 SN, 3 WE crippled, 2 Ftrs.

Now on to round 4...

Your line: BT, CC, 2xBC, CL, 2x[CL], 3x[DD], did you have that extra SC? Firepower: 67, 0 EW, or 69, 1 EW.

Rom's line: KRC, 2xKR, 7 cripples of either WE or SN, BATS, 3 Ftrs. Firepower: 55-62, 1 EW.

Again, in the above example, I assumed you scored the best possible, 35%, while he scored the worst possible, 22.5%. Based on the information you have me, the only way you could have won the battle and convinced him to retreat is if that had happened. It's possible that the ships available were different, and the dice rolls were different, and that those two variable factors balance each other out. So let's stick with those results, for this comparison of strategy.

Your firepower, 69, at 35% = 24 damage.
His firepower, at 55-62, at 22.5% = 12-14 damage.

He kills a [DD], leaving 6-8 damage. You cripple your last CL.

You let the damage fall, 24 damage on his fleet. Technically, if he wants, he can survive yet another round by crippling the KRC and both KR's, but let's assume he's not that crazy. So instead, he scored the last IDS step to cripple the BATS, then kills it for 6 more, burns the 3 Ftrs, and still has 11 to go. KRC gets crippled, and a [SN] dies (unless he had only [WE] on the line, in which case he carries a plus point instead of a minus point forward into retreat. Perhaps instead, he should kill a [WE], cripple a KR.

You pursue with BT, CC, 2xBC, and that extra SC if you've got it. He has the [KRC] in formation, the 2 healthy KR's on the line, and he has 8 crippled [WE] and 7-8 crippled [SN]. Don't forget the crippled [FAL].
Your firepower, 42-44, his is 42, with maybe you having the EW advantage? Have fun!

Difference in the above:

Your casualties, 1st example: 4 dead DD, crippled BC, 2 CL, 2 DD, 1 SC, plus one or more additional cripples from when you pursued him.

His casualties, 1st example: KR, SN destroyed, 2xWE, 4xSN, FAL crippled. 2-3 of the SN died in pursuit, FAL must have been in the formation during the retreat. BATS is dead.

2nd example:

Gorn casualties: 4 DD dead, 3 CL, 2 DD crippled, plus probably another ship crippled in the pursuit of the enemy. Pretty much the same, slightly lighter.

Rom casualties: SN or WE died during combat, KRC or KR crippled, plus all other ships crippled. That's 7-8 WE, 7-8 SN, plus the FAL. BATS died. Depending on what he protected in the formation slot during pursuit, you were like a kid in a candy store and killed the KRC, or KR, or FAL, and maybe some WE or SN as you pursued them outta there. Realistically, he would have been best to self-kill 2xWE or 3xSN and keep the [BATS] alive to retreat behind. Even then, that's 3-4 actual kills, and a world of hurt on his repair cycle.

4-5 dead in the first example, plus 4-5 crippled, vs. 3-4 dead and 15+ cripples in the 2nd. BATS dead either way.

*~*~*

So, while these two examples were undoubtable off to what the actual situation was, do you see how the comparison of the two shows the value of not directing?

As always, this is only to illustrate a minor point. Your overall assessment of the balance of the scenario may still be right, regardless of this particular battle result.

By Peter D Bakija (Bakija) on Sunday, August 28, 2005 - 09:45 pm: Edit

>>Is this a reasonable reconstruction of the battle, or did it go differently? >>

Kinda. He had scouts. We weren't using advanced EW rules or battlegroups.

>>So, while these two examples were undoubtable off to what the actual situation was, do you see how the comparison of the two shows the value of not
Sure. But in the long run, if he is directing and I am not, I'm losing necessary compot to the long run--he can fix all the ships I cripple by T3. I can't replace all the ships he directs by T3. At the end of the game, the compot totals were close enough (I was ahead, maybe, 10-20 points) that if I had consistently not directed while he was directing, I would have undoubtedly lost, rather than pulled off a draw.

>>As always, this is only to illustrate a minor point. Your overall assessment of the balance of the scenario may still be right, regardless of this particular battle result.>>

The particular battle wasn't all that important--the intention was to fight 3 rounds just to direct the BATS. Sadly, due to rolling poorly, it took 4 rounds, but in the end, I lost some ships, he lost some ships, I got some stuff crippled which got repaired, he got some stuff crippled which got repaired, and I killed a BATS. If I had killed, like, 5 more, I would have been golden :-)

-Peter

By Russell J. Manning (Rjmanning) on Monday, August 29, 2005 - 12:16 am: Edit

Peter,

I think I may see a flaw in your reasoning here. Having played the Scenario a few times, I am making a presumption that both were overbuilding out the wazoo. Your using the end scenario compot difference to support the decision to direct because he could have repaired all the cripples by the end of the scenario. However, you seem to be counting the same amout of overbuilds.

If you look at the two examples, in the first, with the 4-5 cripples, repairs appear to be around 9ep from that battle hex. In Kevin's alternative letting the damage fall, the repair cost is in the 20-25 ep range. If he repairs everything, that lowers the amount of ep's available for overbuilding. That in turn should lower his overall compot total at the end of the scenario.

By Peter D Bakija (Bakija) on Monday, August 29, 2005 - 10:41 am: Edit

Yeah--mabe directing the BATS wasn't the best of ideas in the long run, but in any case, it didn't make much of a difference--the problem (ya know, for the Gorns) were the large ships numbers of the Romulans--even with only, like, 60 to 30 ships, the Gorns can only hit so many targets and can only defend so many targets--half of the Gorn BATS that were killed were killed with about 3 ships (~18 compot total--say 2WE and a BH or something), and the bases where the fights were even ('cause the Reserves showed up), the Romulans just ran away after an approach battle.
Like, if the Romulans fight even or disadvantaged fights, then maybe the Gorns can win, but if they are prudent, we are still seeing the game as a draw most often (with the balance of the non draw games falling to the Romulans).

-Peter

I actually got the point of the scenario was for the Gorn to fight for the draw. I could be wrong in this but the impression I got from the scenario description is that the Gorn are basically just trying to convince the Romulans that war at this time is not a good idea and a draw does that.

Russell wrote:
>>I actually got the point of the scenario was for the Gorn to fight for the draw. I could be wrong in this but the impression I got from the scenario description is that the Gorn are basically just trying to convince the Romulans that war at this time is not a good idea and a draw does that. >>

Heh heh. That being the case, the scenario probably works as intended :-)

Going back to the begining of this discussion, I was trying to figure out if anyone had experience with the Gorns actually scoring a victory--it seems vaguely possible, but given the structure of the scenario, as mentioned above, it seems like the Gorns can force a draw (by having more total compot at the end of T3), but the Romulans can kill so many BATS by turn 3 (11-12 BATS is no way out of the realm of possibility, even without killing either SB or entering the 2nd Fleet zone) that the Gorns are unlikely to kill/replace even enough to score a marginal victory. Even if the Gorns *do* kill/replace enough BATS (figure the Roms kill 11, the Gorns need to kill/replace 6 BATS to score a marginal; replacing the BATS is likely a questionable move, as if you can protect a BATS being built, you can protect a pre-existing BATS and save 9 EPs), the cost of killing those 5-6 BATS is likely enough damage that the Gorns don't have more compot at the end of T3, again, leaving the game a draw.

So if the intention of the scenario is to hit a draw most of the time, then it works. But I'd like to think that both sides had an even chance of getting *some* level of victory.

Like, if the Romulans are super gutsy, and do things like attack the SBs and leave their ships in Gorn space (instead of retrograding back to theie BATS), the Gorns can probably kill enough BATS and take little enough damage to score a victory. But if the Romulans don't fight over the SBs (pin the ships defending them but just fight the appropach battle--if the Gorns don't leave ships at the SBs, then sure, kill them on the cheap, but if there are ships there, pin and retreat) and retrograde most of their ships back to Romulan territory between turns, the Gorns
will be hard pressed to kill 3 or 4 BATS, let alone 6.

-Peter

I posted this as a question on the Q&A board, but it is probably more appropriate here.

Can anyone help/advise?

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I have a few questions about the Lyran/Klingon relationship in the first 2 turns.

601.16 and .161 nicely cover the Turn 1 position. In 601.2, it states that the Klingons are not required to attack on Turn 2.

1) If the Klingons do not attack, does the Pre-War status of 601.16 still apply?

2) Most importantly does "All Klingon fleets are unreleased" still apply on a non-attacking Turn 2, or does the 601.2 availability take precedence?

3) Does the TBS move by strat move on Turn 2 if Klingons do not attack?

4) Can Lyrans enter Klingon territory on Turn 2 if Klingons have not "joined" the Coalition?

My strategic idea is that if the Klingons can move the NR and TBS, along with NTP1 & NTP2 to the Northern border, it concentrates the capital attack potential for turn 3 (I estimate 130 ships available), gives the Klingons a maximum "no repairs" build for turns 1, 2, and 3, and stops the Kzinti using the Marquis fleet until T3 - and then only as reserve (I would avoid reaction zones). This also forces the Kzinti to "lose" a reserve on T2 - most Kzinti players will put one marker onto the Marquis fleet, as no sane Coalition player will try to pin it.

Can anyone help me out here?

Regards, Richard

Interesting idea, but I don't know if that actually helps the Klingons at all.

-Yeah, they don't take damage on T2, but if the Klingons and Lyrans don't go into the capital on T2, they outumber the Kzintis tremendously (and all of the Kzinti ships held in the capital don't fight anyone anyway) and don't take that much damage in the first place.
-If the Klingons don't hit Kzinti space, the Lyrans will be taking most of the extra damage that the Klingons aren't.

-The Marquis reserve isn't that big, so you are kind of, like, not attacking with 75+ ships to avoid fighting 10.

I mean, like, it *might* actually be a good idea (assuming all the fleet movements on T2 work for you), but on paper, it looks kind of dubious.

-Peter

By Richard Kempton (Richk) on Sunday, September 04, 2005 - 01:52 pm: Edit

So do you think it's legal? I'd guess the Lyrans can't move into Klingon territory, but I need to be able to redeploy the Klingons.

I'd 100% still attack the capital probably with about 30 Lyrans - and strip off at least 4 PDUs. I probably wouldn't stay long though.

The main Lyran strike on T2 would be on the Counts SB (about 40 ships). This is the absolute max number of available ships. (We play standard F&E 2K without any of the more esoteric modules.)

I might just use it as a positional attack - retreat so as to make any movement back to the capital for T3C defence more difficult for the Kzin.

What I like about keeping the Marquis out of it, is that it forces the Kzin to tie up his reserve marker - limiting him to just one reserve on T2. The Lyrans can splatter lots of targets, or thump a couple. Also, for T3 defense, the reserve has to go on the Marquis again, limiting his reserve coverage to basically capital and Duke's SB. Also the reserve force is at best CV, CVL, CVE, 3BC. I'd far prefer that to the normal DN, 3CV reserve.

If it's legal, I'm going to try it. But I'd like confirmation first.

Thanks, Richard

By Peter D Bakija (Bakija) on Monday, September 05, 2005 - 10:50 am: Edit

Richcard wrote:
>> So do you think it's legal? I'd guess the Lyrans can't move into Klingon territory, but I need to be able to redeploy the Klingons. >>

By my reading of the rules, it seems perfectly legal. According to the 2K rulebook, on T2, all the pertinent Klingon fleets are released (NF, NR, TBS) and the Lyrans
are only specifically restricted from entering Klingon space on T1. There is nothing in the scenario rules that say anything about Klingon fleets and ships only being released if they enter Kzinti space--at the start of Coalition T2, the Klingons get their fleets released and the Lyrans are free to enter Klingon space.

>>I'd 100% still attack the capital probably with about 30 Lyrans - and strip off at least 4 PDUs. I probably wouldn't stay long though.>>

Without the Klingons, how are the Lyrans going to get into the capital? The Kzinti are likely going to have at least that many ships in the capital--they don't know that the Klingons aren't attacking, and if they don't have, like, half (if not more) of their fleet in the capital on T2, the Coalition can potentially capture the Capital on T2. I mean, like, the Kzintis might let the Lyrans in if they are still worried about the Klingons showing up, but then the Lyrans will probably have to fight 3 approach rounds (as the Kzintis will out gun them), and then get mauled over the fixed defenses.

>>The main Lyran strike on T2 would be on the Counts SB (about 40 ships). This is the absolute max number of available ships. (We play standard F&E 2K without any of the more esoteric modules.)>>

Good, good. Me too :-)

I'm not seeing, however, how attacking the Count's SB on T2, when the Kzintis have nothing to do with its reserves that send them to save the SB, as a good idea. Assuming what is (at least in my experience) a pretty standard Kzinti set up at the start of T2, they probably have a battle line at each SB, a reserve in the Marquis Zone, and a reserve either off map or in the capital, and maybe a couple FFs at various BATS or planets, the Lyrans (assuming a no Klingon attack plan that you are trying off) are *much* better off just pinning the fleet on the Count's SB, flooding Kzinti space and attacking as many targets as possible, and staying outside of the reaction zone of any ships in the capital. Wherever the Kzintis send their reserve, you just retreat, and win every other fight you have.

Never fight at Starbases when your opponent can defend them. Pin the ships there, offer an approach, and retreat after a single battle round. When they can't afford to defend them (like, if you are attacking the Kzinti capital and pose a serious threat of capturing it), you can kill them for minimal losses--by turn 3 or 4, the Kzintis can only leave token forces on the forward SBs, at which point you can kill them with minor damage. If you attack the Count's SB on T2, the Kzinti are going to have 20+ ships to defend it (what is there plus a reserve), which'll get an awful lot of Lyrans killed.

>>I might just use it as a positional attack - retreat so as to make any movement back to the capital for T3C defence more difficult for the Kzin.>>
That seems much more reasonable.

>>If its legal, Im going to try it. But I'd like confirmation first.>>

Again, I can't for the life of me see why it wouldn't be legal. At the start of T2, the Klingons are free to attack. Nothing says that *must* attack. Heck--the first move you make on T2 can be Lyran tugs marching into Klingon space, and nothing prevents that--the Lyrans don't have to retroactively leave if the Klingons then don't enter Kzinti space.

Try it out and see what happens. I'm interested.

-Peter

By James Southcott (Yakface) on Monday, September 05, 2005 - 02:26 pm: Edit

Peter is right, this is a recipe for eliminating the Lyran's northern front fleet as a fighting force.

By Richard Kempton (Richk) on Monday, September 05, 2005 - 04:32 pm: Edit

Peter -

Thanks for the interest. I think I'll give it a try.

As long as I dont signal to the Kzin that the 25+ Lyrans going into the capital will be the *only* ships, then he will not react out to pin out anyway. On T2, the max number of Kzin are: Counts 20SE, Dukes 20SE, Home+NTP: 32SE. Out of this is probably an offmap reserve. So in the capital should be only 22SE - assuming Counts and Dukes are on their SBs (if not WAHAY!!). If I attack the capital with 25+, then he has no choice but to let them in, or have the capital totally empty. Obviously if he empties the capital to pin out the Lyrans, then the Klingons attack with 50+ an undefended/reserved to capital.

Where the Lyrans are pinned out, then its an open space battle. Fight 1 round and go, or kill a few useful targets (scouts are one of my faves).

Once in the capital, any reserve is released by the counter-pinning of the PDUs. So he can then weaken his capital by taking the reserve out. If the reserve leaves to fight elsewhere, then his good stuff isnt in the capital - making the approach battle even easier.

--------

James -

It depends how long you sit and grind. Im not as daft as to shout "Wahay! Salvage!" and carry on until there is nothing but frigates left.

I'd make the attack on the capital short - high compot on approach to burst
through in one round (Lyrans can always out-compot early Kzin). If it takes more punishment to get through, then all other attacks will be touch-and-gos.

As for the starbases - if one can be popped for no kills, 20+ cripples, then it is worth it. (Kzin directing is manna from heaven! Less Lyran cripples.) If the Kzin stays on their turn to "exploit" my crippled weakness (and the Kzin will be heavily crippled too, with no immediate repair centre) - and my crips would be retrograded & repaired my next turn - then their capital will fall quicker as they cant retrograde from any decent targets back to the capital. ie. if you pop the Counts, then the Kzin cant come out to play, else none of those forces are available to defend against my next capital assault.

Fundamentally, I dont kill ships ever - except when having to resolve 100+ over a capital. Its thus very hard to "eliminate" any force - my cripples always come back.

Richard

By James Southcott (Yakface) On Monday, September 05, 2005 - 05:06 pm: Edit

Richard - to be honest if I were the Kzinti and you were heading towards the capital with 25 ships I'd let you in. Once you have fought there I get to pursue and kill some ships. Because you can't retrograde at the end of T2C on T2A I get to bash your weakened fleet for another turn and then pursue again. Cripples may come back but you will have lost 5-10 ships and the cripples will take until T4 to get back to Lyran territory to get repaired.

Fundamentally there is no way the Lyrans can take the Kzinti on without the Klingons. They may have higher compot, but they have fewer active SE's in Zin territory and no fighters and are having to fight at a disadvantage over fixed defences. The longer they are without the Klingons, the worse for the coalition.

By Peter D Bakija (Bakija) On Monday, September 05, 2005 - 06:05 pm: Edit

Richard wrote:
>>Peter -
Thanks for the interest. I think I'll give it a try.>>

Cool. I'm totally interested to see what happens. I mean, like, I don't think it is a good idea, but I'm totally entertained by the idea none the less :-)

>>As long as I dont signal to the Kzin that the 25+ Lyrans going into the capital will be the *only* ships, then he will not react out to pin out anyway.>>

That is very likely. If you move the Lyrans first (well, make it look like you are moving the Lyrans first :-) , and 25 ships rush the capital, and the Kzintis have, what, 50 ships there (not unlikely), they'll probably neglect to pin them out, but if the Klingons don't show up, the Lyrans will be gunned down pretty brutally in the
approach (the Kzintis will be fielding 93 + Drone Bombardment + Command Points; the Lyrans will be fielding, like, ~85; I'm assuming plain brown F+E 2K, so no battle groups or Admirals or whatever), so unless they get a lucky on the damage rolls, they'll fight 3 rounds with no fighters to take damage, and then have to spread out over planets. It looks like the entire fleet getting crippled and possibly left out of supply to me.

>> On T2, the max number of Kzin are: Counts 20SE, Dukes 20SE, Home+NTP: 32SE. Out of this is probably an offmap reserve. So in the capital should be only 22SE - assuming Counts and Dukes are on their SBs (if not WAHAY!!).>>

Why would the Count and Duke be on their SBs? The SBs are totally dead in the long run in any situation--by T4, the Kzinti can't afford to leave any significant number of ships there, so the SBs are going to die anyway. And the Coalition have zero incentive to attack the SBs if they Kzintis are intent on defending them. Add that together, and you get a situation where any large numbers of ships left on SBs are essentially wasted--they'll get pinned by hordes of FFs, see one approach round, and that is it.

It'd make much more sense to leave a battle line on each SB (to make it not totally easy to kill them on T2)--that is 24 ships. Of the other 48 ships, have a 12 ship reserve in the capital, another 40 some odd ships in the capital, and then some FFs or DDs spread out at some BATs. Unless the Coalition puts 50 ships in the capital, the capital reserve isn't pinned, and 50 ships in the capital isn't enough to do anything important (but get shot up a lot). So either the Coalition ignores the capital on T2 (saying out side of the reaction zone of the capital ships), or they send a lot more than 50 ships, in which case you probably want the reserve there anyway, and they probably don't have enough other ships to kill the SBs anyway.

>>Once in the capital, any reserve is released by the counter-pinning of the PDUs.>>

PDUs don't pin/counter pin anything. The 2 squads of SB fighters do, but the PDU fighters don't count for anything.

-Peter

Richard wrote:

>>As for the starbases - if one can be popped for no kills, 20+ cripples, then it is worth it.>>

Why is that worth it? What do the Kzintis need their SBs for? You have more ships than them (assuming you don't needlessly cripple your fleets doing things like attacking heavily defended SBs :-), so any ships the Kzintis leave at their forward
SBs are just going to get pinned if they try to go anywhere. And any ship left on a forward SB on T3 or T4 is not one that is keeping the capital around for that much longer, so the Kzintis can't defend their SBs after T2 or T3. Why not simply wait till the SBs are defended by nothing but a token defense force and kill them for 5 or 6 cripples instead of 20? Letting the Kzintis keep the SBs on T2-4 doesn't hurt the Coalition at all—you can pin anything there easily, and keep supply open with hordes of E4s in every other hex.

It is kind of counter intuitive, sure, but you don't actually need to kill the SBs for any particular reason. I mean, like, in the long run, they are good to kill for victory purposes, but by T5 at the latest, you should be able to kill them with, like, a couple random cruisers and a few F5Qs. Why take the damage killing them earlier when you don't have to?

>>Fundamentally, I don't kill ships ever - except when having to resolve 100+ over a capital. It's thus very hard to "eliminate" any force - my cripples always come back.>>

That is perfectly sound strategy. The Kzintis can get a lot of mileage out of always directing Klingons, but that is a large scale strategy decision that the Kzintis need to decide to use early and has a lot of wide ranging consequences.

-Peter

Last sentence of (203.53) (F&E2K pg. 11):

Note that bases and PDUs do not count as ships to pin enemy units, but fighters and/or PFs based on these units could count as ship equivalents.

-Dale Lloyd Fields (Dylkha)

-By Dale Lloyd Fields (Dylkha) on Monday, September 05, 2005 - 09:13 pm: Edit

-Dale

Peter

Last sentence of (203.53) (F&E2K pg. 11):

Note that bases and PDUs do not count as ships to pin enemy units, but fighters and/or PFs based on these units could count as ship equivalents.

-Peter D Bakija (Bakija)

-By Peter D Bakija (Bakija) on Monday, September 05, 2005 - 09:18 pm: Edit

Doh. Did that get changed in 2K? Or am I just on crack?

-Peter

-Dale wrote:

>>Note that bases and PDUs do not count as ships to pin enemy units, but fighters and/or PFs based on these units could count as ship equivalents.>>

-Huh. The '93 rulebook says in that sentence "(including bases)", where the 2K rulebook says "(including bases and PDUs)". So while I've been using the 2K rulebook since it was published, somehow, we never noticed that significant yet difficult to notice change. Exciting to discover, though :-)

-Dale

-By Dale Lloyd Fields (Dylkha) on Monday, September 05, 2005 - 09:36 pm: Edit
Is there anywhere that, like, has a detailed list of all the changes between the '93 rules and the 2K rules, like, line by line? Who knows what other significant yet very difficult to notice changes we have missed...

-Peter

Also, note that (503.4) stops the Lyrans from entering Klingon territory until the Klingons enter the war. The specific exception in (503.61) allows only the capturing of the NZ hexes between the Lyrans and the Klinks.

Why is it that you break up your sentences with 'like'?

Just curious if you are going for the Surfer look or just something that amuses you.

I think it adds color to his online persona. I have this mental image of Peter with a summer shirt, surfboard, and a mullet. Gah, mullets are evil!!!

'Course, I'm not the one to talk - I probably have longer hair than all of you combined.

I "grew up" on the 2K ruleset*, so I don't know of any changes, thought I would be interested in hearing of them. Though I may be spraying water on an electrical fire, I can think of carrier tugs, Hydran shipyard, maulers vs. free scouts, and maulers vs. form? Myself, I'm trying to document all the "ships vs. units vs. equivalents" lines that are in 2K that might be addressed by the Warbook (since 2K doesn't have mobile units or fast ships). Though if someone else is also doing that I can certainly step back.

* I started playing with someone else's set and when I went to purchase my own, SVC told me to wait a month and the 2K set would be out.

Kevin

My long-hair-hippie-freakness challenges you! Feel the wrath of my 45cm! Though, from Origins I can tell you I'm certainly an outlier with respect to the distribution of the group.

In the Four Powers War, how is this for a Hydran T1 build?

Economic Points: 74 [WAR]
0617 DG [8+2], KN [6], KN [6], CR [3.5], CONVOY [6], DG [16+2], LN [8+2], LN [8+2], HN->SC [1]

0215 CU [2.5]

0716 CU [2.5], HN->SC [1]

OM HN->SC [1]

TOTAL SPEND: 69.5 REMAINING: 4.5

I overbuilt the DG for firepower and overbuilt the LNs both to use up all of my free fighter factors and as good "filler" ships (can provide fighters from the rear and have a 6 defense). I figure T1 is a good time to buy the one allowed Convoy - with the supply restrictions of this scenario, I figure it will come in handy. The 3 Scout conversions are all for offensive fleets so seem to make sense.

Comments?

By Peter D Bakija (Bakija) on Tuesday, September 06, 2005 - 04:14 pm: Edit

Chris wrote:

>>WHy is it that you break up your sentances with 'like'? >>

'Cause it is how I talk. I suspect it is how most people talk, but I'm probably one of the only people who likes actually typing that sort of thing out.

>>Just curious if you are going for the Surfer look or just something that amuses you.>>

I'm neither a surfer nor a hippie. I just type the same way I speak, and I say "like" about as much as, well, everyone else does. I just type it in as a pause or a qualifier, as that is both how I speak and how I think.

-Peter

By Peter D Bakija (Bakija) on Tuesday, September 06, 2005 - 04:19 pm: Edit

Dave wrote:

>>Also, note that (503.4) stops the Lyrans from entering Klingon territory until the Klingons enter the war.>>

True. But the Klingons enter the war on T2 regardless of whether or not their ships actually enter Kzinti territory.

Under (601.2), T2, it says that the Klingons are not required to attack, and the Kzintis can attack (even if the Klingons don't). The Lyrans are forbidden from entering Klingon territory on T1, as the Klingons aren't in the war yet. The
Klingons are in the war as soon as Coalition T2 starts, and the North, Northern Reserve, and TBS are released, and the Lyran can enter Klingon territory as soon as Coalition T2 starts--the Klingons don't have to enter Kzinti territory for any of this to happen.

-Peter

By Kevin Howard (Jarawara) on Tuesday, September 06, 2005 - 04:44 pm: Edit

Dale,

I am beholden with awe at your amazing 45 cm hippie-freakness. Never in my life would I have expected to find hair as long as that in a world of professional army wargamers. I am truly stunned and shocked, speechless save for the written word.

HOWEVER.... (note the sardonic dryness of my voice)

78cm. 😐 That's a little over 2 1/2 feet for my american brethren who cannot convert.

I must move my hair every time I sit to avoid pulling my neck as I sit on my hair. Indeed, it would be longer if it did not keep breaking at that length. When I reach forward to move units on the board, I have to hold it back to keep my hair from sweeping the F&E board clean.

So there! 😇

By Mark Ermenc (Mermenc) on Tuesday, September 06, 2005 - 05:07 pm: Edit

Andy, I wouldn't overbuild as the Hydrans ... you can't really afford it ... crank out some PDUs (or at least PGBs) for the capitol to get another turn's endurance out of the starbase.

Plus, don't ever worry about spending your fighters ... you'll more than do that next turn. The Hydrans don't get enough fighters to build the ships they're allowed.

Furthermore, how can you look yourself in the mirror after having built a knight? Sub them for lancers immediately, and without hesitation. Same goes for the TR:HR substitution. I can at least see a few conversions for the TR that don't make it a total waste of time and money, but the KN is garbage in F&E, compared to the LN. (Which is, of course, sad ... as the KN is my favorite ship in SFB, with no exceptions.)

And you need tugs ... you're critically short of them at start ... Hydran tugs with
scout pods can count their fighters in the line. You'll need more tugs to act as replacements once the coalition realizes this. Build them early and often.

Oh, what happened to your war cruiser?

Use your builds ... don't try and make up your own schedule with overproduction ... if you have money left over, save it ... you'll need it later!

This is what I did last game:

F169 (turn 3)
74 EP + 6 FFF
Schedule : Actual production (Cost)[FFF]
  UH: PGS(7)
  DE: DE(5)[1.5]
  AH: AH(3.5)
  AH: GNV(3+6)[2]
  DG: TG(6)[1]
  TR: HR(5)[1.5]
  3CU: 3CU(7.5)
  HN: CR(3.5)
  HN: FCR(3.5+6)
  HN: HNG(2.5)

PGB(3)
2POL(2)
PRIME(0)

HN-SC(1)
DG-LB(2)
DG-LB(2)
DG-LB(2)
2HN-2AH(2)

Remaining: 1.5 EP, 0FFF

Why did I give up the carrier? I was using tugs with carrier pods and LAVs as my carriers ... I didn't want "garbage" carriers (like the UH), and was waiting for the good ones.

Why did I build the escorts anyway? I would need the DEs later in the war, why not have them now? Besides, I was fielding LAVs ... they needed to be escorted.

Why did I build the GNV? Well, that's a pretty good question, actually. I'm still not entirely sure. Mostly, I wanted to try it out and see how it did. It got into small
skirmishes several times, proving that it was generally not worth shooting. Eventually it did get popped, but it took a fair while before that happened.

Why the DG-LB conversions? I like density. I like to be able to put a line of LBs up. It's gruesome, and you can only lose one per round (Unless you run into stasis).

The next time I play the Hydrans, I'll probably just build an AH instead of the GNV, save the 2 FFF for next turn and use the extra 5.5EP along with the 1.5 I had leftover for a PDU. Then again, I had fun with the little thing, so I might just do it again. I dunno.

By Christopher E. Fant (Cfant) on Tuesday, September 06, 2005 - 05:36 pm: Edit

Mark, he is building and playing the 4PW.

By Dave Butler (Dcbutler) on Tuesday, September 06, 2005 - 05:44 pm: Edit

Peter:

But the Klingons enter the war on T2 regardless of whether or not their ships actually enter Kzinti territory.

Bullstuff and other comments. The Klinks can't possibly enter the war "by default"; either they declare War on some other race, or they have War declared on them, or neither happens. In that last case -- which is the one being proposed -- they aren't in the War any more than the Romulans are on T2. In the other two cases -- and remember that there's nothing in the rules prohibiting the Kzinti from declaring War on the Klinks on the Coalition half of T2 -- the Kzinti can, in theory, react ships through the NZ to try and squash your BATS to bugger the Klink supply line into the Kzinti capital. So any Lyrans that go into Klink space probably don't want to go to a position to hit the capital, and at that point what's the point? The rules are quite clear; the Lyrans can enter Klink territory on T2, but if the Klinks aren't at War with someone the Lyrans are interned in their hex of entry (ending their movement).

By John Colacito (Sandro) on Tuesday, September 06, 2005 - 06:03 pm: Edit

My pony-tail, though seriously thinning, is about a foot long. 2.5 feet is impressive.

Clean cut wargamers? My buddy Mick who played SFB, F&E, etc had a pony tail down to his ass. My brother who called himself "Ardak" used to scare skinheads in
the pit and Mike once had a bright orange Mohawk.

Andy

If you are going to overbuild, go for the Rangers (which I will always refer to as the McCubbin Doctrine). They are 12+4. Yeah, you get the one less ComPot, but it costs you 4 less EP. You can then spend 2 EP of that paying for the extra fighters (over those of the DG) and have 2 EP to spend on something else (more HN->SC?). If you are going to overbuild, spend the EP on fusion ships because you can always use the damage sponge and the extra ship equivalents. The last time playing the 4PW, I enjoyed the hellbore +1 versus the Klingons, but paid way too much in repair bills because I was neglecting my hybrid fighters.

Sandro

I need your buds on my team. They would be the ones designated to look over at our opponents and ask "So, you gonna react?"

Kevin

I knew Sandro would be my competition...Anyway, I bow before the power and majesty of the "You Mean It's Long Enough to Sit On!?!" pony tail. Dang. I am simultaneously envious and relieved that mine's only at the middle of my back. I let mine go long in middle school, it got to this length by high school and then has stayed the same length for, jeez, what, 10+ years now? I was getting annoyed by the hair-catching chairs at the Greek Festival this weekend, but with your monster, yowza. Instead of sweeping away counters, I am tall enough to just bend over at the hips and keep my hair out of range of the table. It destroys my back, but nothing's perfect.

Cfant ... 4PW ... makes more sense then

Even still, I'd be very leery of overbuilding ... I hate the notion, and avoid it wherever I can.

As for the Klingons ... to get them at war without attacking, simply have them launch a forward fighter strike from one of their BATS into the Kzinti Neutral Zone. They are now at war, without even risking an E4 to enemy retaliation.

Of course, you could just simply walk E4s into the neutral zone ... pretending to be trying to lure out the Kzinti BATS fighters ... and then not move anything else. If they do suck out a fighter strike, fighter strike from your own BATS/carriers to protect them.
I don't know why you would, since you can cream those BATS on the cheap ... but if you REALLY wanted to ... you just need to send one fighter strike into the neutral zone ... you can't do that without declaring war.

Dave wrote:

>> The Klinks can't possibly enter the war "by default"; either they declare War on some other race, or they have War declared on them, or neither happens.>>

And they do declare war on the Kzintis on T2. Yet still, they are not required to actually enter space, and whether or not they enter Kzinti space has no bearing on their declaration of war.

The scenario (which is what is in question here) states that on T2, the Klingons get three fleets and all new builds released and the Lyrans can enter their territory. It also says that the Klingons aren't required to attack (but says nothing about their fleets being unreleased if they don't attack), and says that the Kzintis can attack even if the Klingons don't.

There is certainly an argument to be made about the the rules in the general sense, but in the scenario, which specifically states what ships are released and when and what you can do with them and what happens in very specific circumstances if you don't do things with them (see: Fed limited war; Gorn limited war), you got nothing.

>> In that last case -- which is the one being proposed -- they aren't in the War any more than the Romulans are on T2.>>

The Romulans don't get released fleets on T2. The Romulans don't have the option to attack anyone on T2.

>>In the other two cases -- and remember that there's nothing in the rules prohibiting the Kzinti from declaring War on the Klinks on the Coalition half of T2 -- the Kzinti can, in theory, react ships through the NZ to try and squash your BATS to bugger the Klink supply line into the Kzinti capital.>>

Yup.

>> So any Lyrans that go into Klink space probably don't want to go to a position to hit the capital, and at that point what's the point? The rules are quite clear;>>

Yes, they are. The Klingons get released fleets, the Lyrans can enter their territory, and the Klingons are specifically not required to attack the Kzintis.
the Lyrans can enter Klink territory on T2, but if the Klinks aren't at War with someone the Lyrans are interned in their hex of entry (ending their movement).

At which point it is convenient that the Klingons are at war with the Kzintis as soon as T2 starts, regardless of whether or not they have entered Kzinti territory.

When someone enters the territory of a race not at war or inactive, they are immediately interned. The Lyrans are free to move in Klingon space on T2, even if that is the first move of the turn. Are you suggesting that if the Lyrans move a bunch of tugs into Klingon space to start setting up bases, that they get interned and have to stop moving *unless* the Klingons have entered Kzinti space first? Or that if you move Lyran ships into Klingon space (Tugs with bases and FRDs say) and then, for whatever reason, the Klingons don't enter Kzinti space (as they are specifically not required to), that you have to then retroactively move the ships backwards and intern them?

The Klingons are at war with the Kzintis as soon as T2 starts. The Lyrans can enter their territory and they can move their active fleets. They are not required to attack the Kzintis.

Anything that you seem to be suggesting would need to be contradicted by the rules of the scenario. Which they aren't. Notice the various places where similar situations are specifically contradicted (the Fed "Limited War" scenario if the Klingons choose not to invade the Feds on T7; that the Romulans only join the Coalition on T10 if they enter Federation space; Federation and Gorn Limited War scenarios if the Romulans don't attack).

-Peter

Dale. Hmmm. Interesting. My thinking was to have a higher Compot line to use once all the fighters were dead, but I guess avoiding getting to that point makes more sense.

That would make it:

Economic Points: 74 [WAR]

0617 DG [8+2], KN [6], KN [6], CR [3.5], CONVOY [6], RN [12+4], RN [12+4], HN->SC [1]

0215 CU [2.5]

0716 CU [2.5], HN->SC [1]
OM HN->SC [1]

TOTAL SPEND: 63.5 REMAINING: 10.5

I guess I could overbuild another LN, but figure I'd rather overbuild an extra RN next turn.

Mark. If not overbuilding, what would you spend the extra points on in 4PW?

By Andy Palmer (Andypalmer) on Tuesday, September 06, 2005 - 11:02 pm: Edit

Another 4PW strategy discussion. The Hydrans kill 0212 and 0413 on T1. They equal or exceed the Lyrans in SE on the front. How should they retrograde to defend their frontline? I thought that 0114 and 0515 might be good, but they still allow the entire Lyran fleet (H+EB; likely in 0411) to attack half of the Hydran fleet at one of the BATS, killing it.

1. Is this necessarily a bad thing, considering the damage I can cause in that battle?

2. Should I instead hold back some of the Hydran forces as a RSRV (perhaps the Gold Fleet in 0716?); this will make it far more difficult to destroy both Lyran BATS on T1 as those forces could pin out the EB RSRV fleet at 0411, but to provide more even SE at the HYD BATS battle, is it worth it?

By Dave Butler (Dcbutler) on Wednesday, September 07, 2005 - 12:04 am: Edit

Peter:
*sigh* I forgot who I was responding to.
Anyhow, since I've been suckered this far, here's what you've missed:

• There was no mention by the OP of the Klinks declaring War and, therefore, the only valid assumption is that they were not at War with anyone.
• There's no mention in (601.0) of any special Lyran exception to (503.4); the prohibition against T1 Lyran movement inside Klink territory doesn't give permission for such movement later.
• I care not whether the Klinks have entered Kzinti space, only whether they've declared War on the Kzinti. That's your strawman, you can stuff it up your arse.
• The Klinks are specifically not at War with the Kzinti at the start of T2. (Else there'd be mention of such status in the rules, and there is no such.) This only makes a difference if you're playing (601.0) as part of (651.0); if you're only doing (601.0) there's no point to not being at War from the start of T2, but it's still not required.
• If the Klinks do declare War on the Kzinti, but do not attack, then the Kzinti can occupy NZ hexes by reaction movement, so either (a) all Lyran and Klink deployment in Klink space must be done with StratMoves, which will ding the Klink economy, or (b) the Kzinti get some bonus cash into an
economy screaming for money, or (c) there's one or more fights in the NZ and the Klinks/Lyrans take damage which is directly counter to the point of the exercise.

You can have the last word; I really wish I had a killfile.
Mark:
Actually, no. The Klinks can send fighters (any units, actually) into the Klink-Kzinti NZ without being at War with the Kzinti. Y'see, (504.61) only requires an alliance or state of War to exist between the owner of the moving units and a Future Belligerent. The Kzinti, assuming they've already at War with the Lyrans, aren't a Future Belligerent because, by (503.4), they've "entered the War". Hence, the Klinks can sweep the NZ without going to War with the Kzinti. Whether this would count as "entering the War" is an open question; I can argue that my occupation of the NZ is a purely defensive measure with no offensive intent. Interestingly, by these rules, if the Feds go Limited War to support the Kzinti, then the Klinks can sweep the K-F NZ without requiring War with the Feds. The Feds have "entered the War", and so are no longer a Future Belligerent and (503.61) no longer applies. Naturally, the Klink East Fleet can't be used for this, and the Feds may, depending on the turn, have active fleets in the area to react off to contest the NZ. (The Feds aren't bound by (503.61) any more than the Klinks are; less, in fact, since the Klinks typically haven't been Future Belligerents since T2.) You can have a year-and-a-half of border warfare between the Klinks and Feds before things finally break down. It's not quite at the point where the "historical" raid on Sherman's Planet in Y169 is actually rules legal (baring the Klinks going into the Marquis), but it's close.

By David Slatter (Davadas) On Wednesday, September 07, 2005 - 06:02 am: Edit

Dave.

Common sense would say that occupation of the Klingon/Zin neutral zone by the Klingons is effectively a DOW against the Zin. The only place where that is not true is when occupying NZ areas next to the tholians, which has special rules, and agains when occupying NZ areas between co-belligerants (L/K NZ rule turn 1).

By James Southcott (Yakface) On Wednesday, September 07, 2005 - 11:32 am: Edit

David's right, when you enter a NZ you either have to accept internment immediately or declare war (except as pointed out)

By Richard Kempton (Richk) On Wednesday, September 07, 2005 - 12:44 pm: Edit

Apols for stirring up a hornets nest on this T2 Klingon question. Nickgb has answered my query on the Q&A board.

Yes, all Klingons listed are released. No, they do not need to attack. Klingons have joined Coalition, and so Lyrans can enter Klingon space at will.

Now to see if the strategy will work...
Dave wrote:
>>You can have the last word; I really wish I had a killfile.>>

Dude.

A) You really need to reconsider how you spend your time on the internet if you are going to get this irritated over completely civil discussion.

B) Hey, what do you know? According to the official rules guy, I was correct. What are you gonna do?

-Peter

4PW Suggestions:

Andy, I think your build schedule looks good. The HN->SC are excellent. The overbuilds are good. If you don't mind me babbling for a while...The thing about Hydran fighters in the 4PW is that they are the single greatest Alliance advantage in this game. The more you exploit them, the more you crush the Coalition. Remember that your BATS have fighters and theirs don't. That means that a BATS without any defenders takes 15 damage to kill if it is theirs, and 21 damage to kill if it belongs to you (a 40% bonus). If you take on a BATS with a DG + 2xLN, you can kill it in two rounds at 35% while if it only rolls 35% you walk away from the battle with 2 plus points and and fighter losses only! Also, the Coalition has no maulers, so your cruisers are a lot more durable. So the Coalition will be throwing away a bunch of damage if they want to hurt you. Another thing to consider is that the total ComPot of Coalition lines will not be that big. Consider this fairly impressive Klingon line: D7C, D7, D7, D6, D6, BG:{2xF5Q} for 71 ComPot. That requires a 35% to be able to kill a cruiser. Monkey with the BIR and he is going to find it difficult to kill anything but your destroyers. Plus, figure your equivalent battle line: LC, RN, RN, RN, RN, BG{6xLN} which has 88 ComPot but has 31 fighters for a damage sponge (heck, even replacing 3xLN with 3xCU gives you 81 ComPot with 25 fighters). The problem is if you put up a hellbore line: LC, 4xDG, BG:{6xKN}, you only have 11 free damage and if I were the Coalition I'd let you take it all. Rangers are cool because with no maulers and lower Coalition ComPot, they should live and their four damage sponge can be used again and again. Beyond that, there is only two things that I would suggest as the Hydrans: 1) The Hellbore +1 is really not that impressive, especially since you don't have significant ComPot yet. It is a 2.5% bonus, which at that 88 ComPot I mentioned earlier is 2 more damage. And you have to give up a significant fighter sponge. Because I like charts:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Threshold ComPot</th>
<th>Extra Damage</th>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>+1</td>
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I don't know if they modified the substitution rules, but I would even suggest not building any hellbore ships at all! Sub a RN for your DG. Sub a LN for a KN. Both sets cost the same. And the fusion ships come with fighters (which also give you extra SEs). The second thing is that the Klingons will probably kick your tripartite ass in the EW war. They have the D6Ds, the Drone Pods, the F5Ss and eventually the D6S. You have the SC. If you are playing with the expansions, I would seriously urge you to consider building SASs. Yeah, they take 12 directed damage to destroy in the free scout box and can only move 3 a turn, but they do have 2 EW and only cost 4 EP, which is 0.5 EP more than a SC. You might only be able to use the SAS over your own defenses, but that means you probably won't be losing the EW war too badly. And you get to build one of those a turn.

Finally, on your retrograde question, I'd say you really don't need to worry about the Lyrans coming in and breaking things too bad. At most you lose a BATS, but I agree that you can smack him around something fierce. He'll have to spend at least two turns crippling, then blowing up the BATS (36 damage with a 90 ComPot super-Lyran force is 40%) at which you should be shifting him, you'll out-ComPot him in open space, never-you-mind at the BATS itself. You can probably take a few approach battles so you end up with zero fighters at the end of the approach plus two BATS rounds. If you have 30 fighters that means he'll be crippling 5 extra CLs over an even exchange (which it won't be). Use every opportunity to grind the Coalition out of ships. You are THE superpower in this game.

Dale. I only have 2K and FO (and am not even using the full FO rules - just the extra ships), so not all of what you wrote applies, but I do see the valid points.

I wasn't aware that you could substitute RN for DG, etc.....

The use I see for the HB ships is SB assaults - eventually, you will run out of fighters and will need to maintain high compot (even if it means swapping them late in the battle). Does that make sense?
Andy

You can just choose not to take fighter losses once you get down to about 1 battle force worth. Go into a SB battle with forces consisting of LCs, RNs, and LNs, that has a total of say 83 fighters, take 52 points of fighter damage and then stop and keep 31 fighters so you can have a full line of LC, 4xRN, 6xLN. If you need to take 18 damage, cripple 3xLN, swap them out for 3x uncrippled LN which are in your reserve and dump those six fighters onto the uncrippled ships. You've then keep up your ComPot without loosing any fighters. The thing to watch out for is that the Coalition can direct on fighters if it wants to, so you might keep maybe 1.5-2 battle forces worth of fighters in the hex to dissuade your opponent from doing so. People will have to help me out on this, but I think if you direct on fighters you can only direct on the entire battle force worth of fighters at once, or fighters off of one particular unit. Is this right? If this is true, then the Coalition will never be able to direct on your entire battle force's fighters (no way are they doing 50-60 damage), and then the best thing they can do is kill fighters 4 at a time by killing a particular RN's fighters. I think. I can check that when I get my rulebook in front of me.

If the scenario rules don't forbid it, never build KNs, only LNs. They cost the same, but there is no ComPot advantage for the hellbore ship over the fusion ship. Again, while I would never build DGs over RNs, I can see that they are 1 more ComPot and that can add up if you put in a full cruiser line. But again, if you are putting up LC + 9xDG (109 ComPot) you have 21 fighters on the line which means you are probably going to have to cripple cruisers every round, whereas if you have LC + 9xRN (100 ComPot) on the line you have 39 fighters and you won't have to cripple a thing.

By Jimi LaForm (Laform) on Wednesday, September 07, 2005 - 05:17 pm: Edit

Dale, that is partially correct. The player can choose to either kill fighters from a specific carrier (Fed CVA for instance) or fighters in general. The in general method allows the defender to replace the Fed CVA fighters at will from any source, but if you choose to direct on specific fighters they can only be replaced by equal fighter types (F-15, F111, Stinger2 etc).

By Kevin Howard (Jarawara) on Wednesday, September 07, 2005 - 05:29 pm: Edit

Dale,

I'm pretty sure you're wrong on the directing on the fighters issue. I think you can direct on as many fighters as you wish. Score 28 damage, direct on 14 fighters. However, as long as the Hydran still has spare fighters, that just let's them play their game more effectively. You got 83 free damage in the example you gave; wouldn't it be great if the Klinks directed 166 damage to remove them? So you're still correct - probably twice a full battleforce's worth of fighters will dissuade the Klinks from directing on fighters.
Andy,

Another point to remember is that if you're forced into using cripples on the line, many of the fusion cripples keeps their firepower up better than their hellbore counterparts. A KN takes 6 points to cripple, going from 6 compot to 3. A LN takes 7 to cripple (6 plus one fighter), and goes from 4+2 compot to 3+1. Similarly, the DG goes from 9+2 to 4+1, a drop of 6, while the RN goes from 6+4 to 4+2, a drop of only 2.

And of course, if you are crippling ships slower because of all the damage on fighters, then in that starbase assault, the full fusion line would remain at high compot longer than would a full hellbore line. This is slightly tempered by the reduced defenses from the full hellbore line early on, since with a full hellbore line you'd have higher maximum compot and with the +1 you'd be scoring maximum damage possible. Just have plenty of fusion ships to finish off the battle for you after the hellbore ships are swept away.

Jimi, I think you mis understand, Fed fighter replacements (atleast until you get up to the A20 and F11 level) never have to come from the same source, regardless of how the losses came about. Any fed carrier can provide replacements for any fed carrier, this is the "Magic F18" principle that many complain about.
Where directing on a specific squadron would be useful is when dealing with multi race fleets where one side has fewer replacements then the other... i.e. If the Klingons are facing a combined Fed/Kzinti Fleet and the Kzinti only had 2 CV's and an FCR where the Feds had 100 fighters in reserve, direct on the Kzinti Fighters so he cannot keep the CV's on the line...

Obviously this is where the Lyran/Klingon arrangement is really helpfull....

Yeah, what Jimi said on the fighters! As many as you want, not the whole or nothing.

(302.54) Options: A player designating Directed Damage against fighters or PFs has two options.
(302.541) Option #1: The designated player may do so against any or all such units in the opposing Battle Force, not merely against one such factor or "ship equivalent" group of factors. In such case, however, the owning player selects which carriers (bases, tenders, PDUs, etc.) that the destroyed fighters/PFs are removed from.
(305.542) Option #2: The designated player can select as the target for
Directed Damage all (or some) of the fighters or (not and) the PFs assigned to a single given unit. Unit includes a base, PDU, carrier, PFT or an independent fighter/PF unit. In such case, only a limited number of fighters/PFs can be destroyed, but the designating player can decide which carrier (or whatever) loses them.

So option 1, direct as many fighters as you want, but your opponent gets to choose where
Option 2, pick where the fighters are from but be limited to that source for how many fighters you can destroy....

Tim wrote:
>>Any fed carrier can provide replacements for any fed carrier, this is the "Magic F18" principle that many complain about.>>

As a quick aside, how does this actually work? I've been looking around and can't find an actual answer.

Assume a Fed CVB group (8 fighters--a squad of, what, F15s?) loses all its fighters. Some of the cheerleading carriers not in the battle want to send forward replacements. What happens:

A) A CVT (6 fighters) sends its 6 fighters to the CVB. Those 6 fighters magically become a squad of F15s for 8 compot?

B) A CVT and an FV send forward 8 total fighter factors (of a total of 9 from the two carriers) which, while "actually" 16 individual F18s, they all land on the CVB and magically become a squad of 12 F15s?

Thanks!
-Peter

Peter,
Its Option B, I'm trying to find out where in the rules it is stated, its mostly inference from other rules..
These carriers are given special exemptions because they are carrying no more actual fighters, but the fighters (CVB = F-15, CVA = F-14/A-10, SCS = F-14/F-18/A-20) are sufficiently superior that their combat factors are higher. If the Fed CVB is reduced to 6 fighter factors (or the CVA to 12, or the SCS to 18) or fewer (and no fighters are transferred to the ship, magically becoming the better types), the remaining fighter factors are simply combined with other fighter factors in the Battle Force and the special cases are ignored. For independent operations, the 15 factors on the Fed CVA are divided into a squadron of 8 (the F-14s) and a squadron of 7 (the A-10s). The fighters on an SCS are divided into a squadron of 6 (the F-18s), a squadron of 8 (the F-14s), and a squadron of 10 factors (A-20s). These squadrons are “ship equivalents” under (501.9) and (302.332).

also

Quote:

(501.6) Transfers
(501.61) ...
For example, a Federation FV group in the Reserve might give up its fighters to a CVB group in the Battle Force, allowing it to remain as full strength.
...

Okay, so nevermind about my comment about directing on fighters. In this case, I would advise to keep about one battle force worth of fighters in reserve just so the Coalition can't whack your ComPot. But seriously folks <honk> <honk>, the Coalition will probably only be doing 30 damage max or so (especially without the ADM of AO), so it will take him several rounds of directing on fighters to clear your battle force. If you have no fighters in reserve, and he does that, you take two rounds with no damage, then retreat with no permanent losses.

You expect the Klinks to do 23 or less damage in an attack where he directs on fighters. So except over a capital I would save no more than 11 extras in reserve.
If he does 24+ damage and directs on fighters then the fighters are dieing to protect a cruiser from destruction. Which is right, proper, and their natural purpose in existence, a slight ComPot loss is acceptable to keep a cruiser alive and absorb 24+ damage for "free".

If he does 23- damage and wants to direct on fighters for at LEAST two rounds (after he has already worked through 40+ fighter factors you self killed) in order to drop your ComPot on a hypothetical third additional round this also is good, you fight your last two rounds more or less for free and then leave. You will even still have enough fighters for the persuit round since he is not going to kill the entire 30 or so remaining factors in his second round of directing on fighters.

Using your fighters up is the objective. If he is willing to HELP you to do so at double the damage absorption for the fighters I am not going to complain. (Capitals are a special case, winning the battle is so important compared to the loses that fighters have to be conserved to help force minus points).

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**By Peter D Bakija (Bakija) on Wednesday, September 07, 2005 - 06:51 pm**

Tim wrote:
>>>(Its Option B, I'm trying to find out where in the rules it is stated, its mostly inference from other rules..)>>

Yeah, that is how we always played it, but I can never actually find anything that specifically spells that out.

Thanks!
-Peter

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**By Jimi LaForm (Laform) on Wednesday, September 07, 2005 - 07:27 pm**

I think my good buddy Timbo is wrong, sounds like a Nick ruling is required.

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**By John Doucette (Jkd) on Thursday, September 08, 2005 - 11:00 am**

Peter, the way the magic F-18s work is that any Fed carrier except F111 (and possibly the V types, I don't have FO) carriers can transfer fighters in on a factor-by-factor basis. Using your example, if a CVB lost all 8 factors and a CVT was available to transfer its complement, the CVB would then have 6 factors, not 8.

Or at least that's my understanding.

It's a toss-up, really, as to which is better. Under the old system, people complained that keeping track of all the special Fed fighters was too much work for not enough gain, and so the magic F-18 fix came in. And now, we've got complaints going the other way 😊

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**By Peter D Bakija (Bakija) on Thursday, September 08, 2005 - 12:30 pm**

John wrote:
Or at least that's my understanding.

Yeah, that is how we always played it (the factors on the CVB are just factors, and you replace them with just factors--i.e. 6 from the CVT replace 6 factors, and the CVB then has room for 2 more from somewhere else). And reasonably probably the best way to deal with it.

But still, the rules are kinda vague, and I'm wondering if this is actually concretely spelled out anywhere.

Thanks again,
-Peter

By Nick G. Blank (Nickgb) on Thursday, September 08, 2005 - 07:02 pm: Edit

8 factors of F18s (1 squadron plus some) become 8 factors of F15s (1 squadron). You don't magically gain any combat factors, but the type of fighter changes...

By Nick G. Blank (Nickgb) on Thursday, September 08, 2005 - 07:02 pm: Edit

Or in other words, option B, yes.