Jkd, when weren't fighters transferable to the Fed supercarriers? I thought that I always remembered that to be the case, even back in the 80s versions of F&E.

Nope, in the original version, once the CVA and CVB lost fighters, they could receive replacements, but only to the limit of nominal groups (i.e. 12 and 6), unless another CVA or CVB was present.

John, I got the '86 version of F&E right in front of me, and I don't see any rule saying I can't transfer fighter factors back and forth freely. Where is that rule saying I couldn't?

Was it in one of the playtests of the original version and removed before publication?

Funny, I can't find it, either ;) It may have been a mis-read of 302.352 in the DF&E REV 2-19 rulebook, where it talks about the Fed fighter exception for ship equivalents.

Did someone ever appeal this ruling, I just found it last night believe it or not, and I think it is incorrect. I have always played under the assumption that one squad from a lesser carrier(6 factors, 12 F-18's) magically becomes (8 factors, 12 F-14's or F-15's) thus gaining factors. The idea being that the lesser carrier was really carrying replacement F-14's or F-15's for the larger ship. 12 for 12 just makes the most sense.

If you move 6 fighter factors from a CVS carrier to a CVB carrier they are still 6 factors, they don't suddenly increase up to 8.

You can move 6 factors from CVS #1 and 2 factors from CVS #2 onto a CVB making an 8 factor squadron. These 8 factors are now magically considered the better fighter type even though originally they were standard fighters. That is what the rule means.

Yea but that doesn't symbolize what the rule is actually about and it doesn't really provide the right addition. The deal behind the F-14's/15's is that they are better so each factor is worth a little bit more then .5 per fighter.
For example:

Ship XXX(F-18's) has the factors 7-8(8), CVS #1 and CVS #2 contribute 8 factors to refill the ship.

Ship CVB(F-15's) has the factors 7-8(8), under your logic this ship would be identical to the ship above with the only difference being that it can bring it's 8 factors into battle as a single squad.

If I have a couple of FCR's with F-15 replacements in SFB I can transfer those units to a CVB. I transfer a total of 12 fighters, I should not have to use 3 FCR's in F&E.

The way I've always viewed it (and I know this isn't cannon, or even correct, but it works for me), is that when the CVS brings spare fighters for the CVB, the fighters are larger and need more spare parts. They load only 3/4 of the deck with actual fighters, and the remaining quarter is filled with spare parts, drones... maybe even wings (to be quickly reassembled to put the larger F-15's back into action.

Net result, the CVS transfers the fighters it was able to carry, which since they were more powerful than standard fighters, relate to 6 factors. Another CVS brings in the extra 2 factors worth (they also were bringing spare F-15 parts), and the total force is combined to give the CVB its 8 factors worth.

I've even reasoned that the CVS could operate the fighters, but without using the extra ammo, so they remain at only 6 factors worth. In essence, they have about 9 or 10 fighters equaling 6 factors worth, and the extra spare parts are just taking up space on the fighter deck. Or maybe that's all 12 fighters, but without the extra drones, so it's still 6 factors worth.

Whatever the reasoning, it makes it easy for F&E. A factor is a factor is a factor.

The other key part of this is that you are paying 8EP's. I was almost positive that some one posted in 2002/2003(maybe even before then) that this reflected the other units carrying the F-15's.

My opinion was that the CVS and CVB ships have no physical differences other than their fighters and the deck layout to service those fighters.

Strictly speaking, there is no way the CVS fighters should magically become better when stuck in a CVB. But for simpicity, that's what happens - they morph
into F-15s.

But the whole issue of different fighter types is completely ignored in F&E anyway, and to a certain extent in SFB. Simply shoving a TAAS squadron on a Zin carrier that had AAS isn't going to work in the immediate term - the carrier deck crews would require some retraining and the carrier would probably require a different suite of spare parts for the fighters. TAAS are much better than AAS, and the only reason why the Zin (or anybody else) doesn't get 8-pt fighter squadrons is that this is not such a large difference as the F15/F4 one. And yet everybody else has no problems bandying about all their different fighter types between carriers. While the Federation has better fighters, they are penalised by having separate fighter supply systems for F111s and A20s, and pay a hideous surcharge for F15s on CVBs.

While it is a fudge for the Feds, it's a fudge for everyone else as well. Because there is no way that an E4V carries as good fighters as a C8V, but they both cost the same per fighter factor, and are equally as effective.

By Mark Ermenec (Mermenc) on Monday, February 27, 2006 - 04:56 pm: Edit

Yeah, would you really want to track which carriers are holding which kind of fighters? Which kind of ammunition they're holding?

It's not just the Feds, either, even in Y-175 before the heavy fighters come out, most races have a lot of choices.

Feds: F-4, F-8, A-6, A-7, A-10, E2 SWAC, F-14, F-14, F-16, F-18, F-20
Klingons/Lyrans: Z-1, Z-2, Z-D, Z-P, Z-V
Roms: G-1, G-F, G-2, G-SF
Kzinti: AS, AAS, SAS, DAS, HAAS
Gorn: G-8, G-10, G-18, G-20
Tholian: S-1, S-2, S-2P, S-3, S-E
Hydrans: 30 stinger variants (no, I'm not listing them)
Orion/Wyn: See above, they used everyone's.

And this just gets worse as you go on into the late war. Yes, some become "obsolete", but the lower BPV/EPV brings them into scenarios. Furthermore, they sometimes have features (damage capacity, drone layout) not available in newer models. Hence, there are reasons you may want it ... lower speeds aren't as critical if you're using the shuttles as launching platforms to build up drone waves, but damage capacity helps protect from long range fire.

There are "attack" fighters and "space superiority" fighters and "bomber" fighters, which are of more or less use in certain engagements (open space fleet, carrier duel, base assault, whatever). So, sometimes 12 fighters would be more than 6 F&E factors, sometimes they would be less.
Some carriers can't handle certain fighters ... or handle them efficiently.

Escorts, small carriers and even cruisers can manage to handle fighters, too. In SFB, if you don't have any deck crews, you get the equivalent of two deck crews, and can even buy more. Even without a carrier, you can handle fighters just fine, too.

So an FCR and escorting vanilla warships gets pinned out going somewhere (oops) ... in an SFB scenario, there's a squadron of fighters working away, going back to the warships (who are stripping drones out of drone rack reloads or drone ship cargo boxes) for resupply ... in an F&E battle, those fighters can never be launched.

Yeah, there's lots of differences, but that's part of the transition of scale.

We already do track Federation fighters, when you play with Megafighters,F-111's, A-20's and F-15's/F-14's. The other races don't really have the same advantage the fed ones do. In anycase I don't want to track the 100's of fighters but I do think that the rule is incorrect.

I seem to remember that the original (1989?) rules did distiguish between the special Federation fighters and regular fighters. There was the tactic of directing damage against F-14 and F-15 squadrons. During one of the revision, this rule was changed to simpliy things.

It's been many years, so I could have imaged this.

Problem is, that if you say that 6 CVS fighters magically become 8 CVB fighters you have just given the Feds free points. Now, I am the last person that wants to say this but that is just not how it works, nor should it.

The Feds have plenty of fighters, and the ability to take 8 CVS factors and merge them into 1x8 Point squadron is already bonus enough. Same thing works for A-20s and F-14s etc.

The F-111s being separate from the system works because they are the Fed PF and it just makes sense.

Think of it this way, if you had a CVA group and then...say 6 FCRs and 6 CVS groups....

The rules: 8+7+6+6+6+6+6+6+6+6+6+6+6=87 Total Factors. All paid for.
The way it would work if you got 6->7/8:
8+7+8+7+8+7+8+7+8+7+8+7+8+7+8+7=56+49=105 Total Factors. 18 For Free
(36 EP). It gets worse if you use all the squadrons for F-14s only, another 7
factors for free (14 EP).

Its just too good a deal if it were to work the way you guys are talking about.

By David Slatter (Davidas) on Tuesday, February 28, 2006 - 09:52 am: Edit

When I said "morph", I meant 8 factors worth of CVS fighters (1 1/3 squadrons)
morph into 8 factors of CVB fighters (1 squadron). I am in no way advocating 6
suddenly becoming 8.

By Christopher E. Fant (Cfant) on Tuesday, February 28, 2006 - 10:03 am: Edit

THat was for everyone else David.

By Trent Telenko (Ttelenko) on Tuesday, February 28, 2006 - 06:21 pm: Edit

>>&gt;Same thing works for A-20s and F-14s etc.

Not if you are using F.O.

A-20's do not get the 'magic morphing F-18' rule from standard CV's or CV tug
pods any more.

They use FCR factors, FCA factors (which is A-20 only), or the A-20 resupply
pods.

By John Pepper (Akula) on Tuesday, February 28, 2006 - 08:35 pm: Edit

The A-20's rule wouldn't work very well for the other Fed fighters because their
aren't enough platforms:
The A-20 has
ACS
CAV
CSV
FCA
HDWH
NVA
SVV
P-AVP
SCS

Against the
BB
CVD
planet
for the F-15

the
You could print some more F-14/F-15 counters and let FCR's carry them but without smaller carrier platforms the balance would be shifted towards the Coalition. Not only that but it would add another group of counters that would have to be stacked for very little gain.

I know this has probably been asked or commented on a billion times before, but I'm curious as to what average fleet sizes are in most games. The reason I ask is that in my current ftf game, both I and my opponent have gone to a smaller fleet doctrine as an experiment and we were wondering if this is SOP elsewhere. We normally have medium to large fleets somewhere in the range of 4-7 battleforces in strength but found that while that worked exceedingly well defensively, it tended to bog down offensively.

Thus far, the new doctrine seems to be working wonders for the Coalition, enabling a quick take down of the Hydrans and even a T7 attack on the Feds which has the Feds very close to the edge of collapse. The down side is that casualties, which had been heavy under the large fleet doctrine, are even worse under the new one. I have a sneaking suspicion that the small fleet doctrine was the intended mode of play for F&E, as we're seeing more ships self-killed, more deficits running as drone bombardment increases, more targets are blasted into atoms, etc, and I'm wondering if there's any consensus either way on what the 'right' way to play F&E is and whether or not the system tends to strain and/or break down when the 'correct' way isn't followed.

Please elaborate on what you mean by "smaller fleet doctrine". This will help figure out exactly what you have going in to say a counter-attack on the Hydrans or the Invasion of the Federation.

No "super-stacks" of 100+ ships.

He said "4-7 battlelines". Which would translate to between 50-100 ships (about).
theater.

Funny, but this is generally the way I play also. Large fleets are only for major targets. You split up your fleets to hit everywhere that is viable and will not badly detract from your major target for that turn.

That way on T1, 1-2 of the Kzinti battlestations fall on the Lyran border (reinforced by the Dukes fleet), T2 everything south of 04 falls unless the Kzinti DON'T want to fight over the Dukes SB (you could do a semi-serious Capitol raid to strip PDUs instead of a major assault on the Dukes SB), T3 everything outside of the Kzinti Capitol falls as their Homeworld hex gets stripped and the Lyrans EB Duchy falls, T4 the Kzinti Capitol falls for horrendous losses on BOTH sides (I generally fight to the death with anything smaller than a BC/CA) and the Hydran border Bats dissappear from the Klingon border (What happens to the Lyrans depends on what they've done on T3 + 4), and T5 the Klingons go into the Hydran Capitol to devastate all the planets they can (Not the capitol) and kill the SBs on their border (1st and Exp). After this it all depends on how much has been lost on BOTH sides.

However I notice that on MOST posts everyone likes pinning forces out of wherever they can and start to collect HUGE fleets of FFs + DDs to do this. This is the bean counters way of doing things. It works wonders in most games but not too well in actual life (I'M NOT saying that it doesn't work at all). Fortunately for them it's a game and the rules allow this. There is no passion of the crews for glory or revenge or even cowardice to throw a monkey wrench into their numbers. Vulcans apparently crew the space forces of all races, either that or robots (no difference sometimes).

Scott has the right of it. We used to amass fleets of 50-70 ships in the main theatres, less where the need/capability was less, more as a defensive option, which then translated into larger attacking fleets, and so on. Now we're fielding fleets of 20-25 ships on average and were curious if that was about where most others are at and what effect, if any, using larger fleets had on the game system. With smaller fleets, for example, we're seeing more troop attacks, vastly increased need for specialty ships, etc, whereas under the large fleet doctrine, we rarely, if ever, produced troop ships, much less used them, rarely self-killed ships, etc.

If you were going to attack a Tholian base (and I'm not saying you should), how would you go about it?

Here's what I can think of:

Obviously, use as many attrition units as possible. They can soak up damage with no permanent effect. That's why the swarm was so handy historically. But I've
also been looking at the big war from 92-102 when no fighters were around.

To me, the killer isn't the inability to attack the base (well, except for the capital PDUs). If attacking a numerically and qualitatively inferior opponent (which are the Tholians pre-Y168 and somewhat pre-Y178), I'm happy to trade blows over a BATS for as long as they'll stay. Over a SB isn't so nice but it's hard to anything else with a SB as SIDs is so costly.

The killer to me is the inability to withdraw cripples. Your compot drops rapidly with previous cripples around.

What's the consensus on whether it's best to self kill facing Tholians? (after absorbing as much as possible on fighters/PFs) I think it might be best to keep compot reasonable.

Is it worthwhile to put a tug or two on the line to pull out cripples? I haven't really calculated this through, with the drop in compot but less self killing that way. I normally don't like to expose tugs on the line but, against the Tholians, it might be worth having a tug directed on rather than either self killing two cruisers or crippling three cruisers who are then stuck and doomed. Plus, tugs aren't quite as precious as they were before LTTs were available.

How has everyone else handled the Tholians? (Not counting just ignoring them in the General War)

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By Loren Knight (Loren) on Friday, April 21, 2006 - 01:50 pm: Edit

Wait 200 years to see if the Selts come back in force?

By Jimi LaForm (Laform) on Friday, April 21, 2006 - 02:36 pm: Edit

Well, in one of my previous games as the Coalition I felt that I was far enough ahead in the game (many turns of good luck) that I decided to do a dual blitz of the Tholians with a huge combined Klinks/Romulans assault. All of Tholian space fell in one swoop but it cost me (if memory serves me right) 105 dead Coalition ships. This put the rest of the war in Fed space in dire straights. Unfortunately for my opponent he made a couple strategic mistakes and was unable to take advantage of the situation.

In retrospect here are my thoughts on killing the Tholians. I was so far ahead in that game I wanted to see if taking the Tholians was worth it... I find that it was not. I lost a ton of ships (some say that my losses were above average but I don't think anyone else has actually ever taken Tholia in a GW campaign that I'm aware of so hard to compare notes), should have lost the initiative and the war. I got extremely lucky though and my opponent was not playing at his best so he failed to eek victory out of the jaws of defeat.
I'd go for lines something like the following:-
(spending a command point, and assuming mid-war)

D6S (form)  
C8V(ADM)-AD5-AD5-F5E  
D6U-AD5-F5E  
[3D5 3F5L/F5]  
D6S (scout)  
3D6D (drone)

SAF (whenever possible)

It's important to put the Tholians under EW pressure, because they are so bad at it. It may be worth considering putting in a D5S in the battlegroup if the Tholians aren't defending the homeworld.

SAFs are vital because they ignore web, allowing you to score against the bases.

You could go for a mauler approach (killing fighters/ships at 1:1), but that will involve rearrangement of the carriers. You would probably replace the C8V with 2 Independent fighter groups, a C8 (form), and a mauler. If using SAFs, consider replacing the C8V with a LAV, mauler, D5S, and the Drone tug (ADM switches to D6U). Tholians will have the difficult choice of killing the LAV or the SAF. If this involves moving the scout out of the form box, replace D6S(form) with D6D or D5S.

Now, this does quite well against tholians. The tholians will probably want to kill the SAF, which will be 18. With 24 fighters on the line and EW aplenty, 42 will probably soak up what the tholians will put out unless they are defending Tholia itself. Occasionally, a SB+line might put out 50-60 damage, but you aren't worried about losing a few F5Ls/F5s (or E4s, come to think of it). And if they don't target the SAF, then losing the odd D5 as well will be worth it for the extra 2 SIDS.

Against Tholia, this still does OK. Tholia will surely choose to kill the SAF to prevent PDU's being mangled. (18). Lose fighters (42). Lose 3 F5L (69). Lose 3D5 (102). Lose up to 2F5E (which can be replaced with F5R) (118). So you can take 118 damage before things start getting serious. At that point, your next loss will be the form bonus scout.

If Tholia is likely to do more than ~120 damage, then you will have to switch strategy, probably removing the C8V and replacing with other fighters/ships as above, so you can avoid losing a carrier. If Tholia is likely to do in the region of ~150, then you have foolishly allowed it to get to 20PDUs, and probably shouldn't be assaulting it anyway.
The bottom line is that you must take plenty of fighters and SAFs. For tholia, 100 fighters and 4-5 SAFs would be be absolute minimum. Otherwise, any carriers will be a low compot liability once your fighters run out. But that's why you have the swarm. You should use the fact that you can occupy Tholian neutral space so that you can strike the capital with all your auxiliary carriers (Klingon *and* Lyran preferably) on the turn you declare war.

Oh - one final thing. Take at least 2 D6U, as the tholians may try to dirdam-cripple that problem away. Note no tugs. I think it is best to simply self-destroy. If the tholians dirdam-cripple a D6U group, they will probably finish the job if you try to put in a tug to pull out the D6U. More elegantly, they may dirdam-cripple the tug.

The Admiral can't switch to a D6U if there is a bigger CR ship in the hex.

SAFs are a good idea but there's never enough of them, especially if you are playing the scenario where the assault starts in Y168. If you're planning on assaulting Tholia, then it would probably be best to not use them at all on the other SBs. At a SB, the Tholians are better off not hitting the SAF and causing a couple more ships to die. A couple sids is not that bad when you're going to have retreat soon anyway - The Tholians don't have the ship count or enough fighters to hang around long.

I was thinking battle groups but forgot to mention them. Since you're going to self kill, it's best to try not to chew up cruisers.

Against Tholia, I would be using the SAFs on the PDUs. The Tholians don't have a big enough fleet to be a serious threat when they only have a SB.

I would be very happy if the Tholians allowed the SAFs to go in. That's 18 less compot they have next round.

Micheal. I think the Admiral can be on any CR8+ ship. The switching restrictions only come into play when you are using variable Admirals IIRC and are primarily meant to prevent you exiling a -1 ADM on a D6.

The Tholians only need to cripple the SAF, and "killing" it is pointless (and prohibited by the rules); see (CO-520.41).

316.14 SHIPS: Admirals must always be assigned to the best available ships
which meet the requirements of this rule, based on command ratings.

You're thinking of the next paragraph that says:

NOTE: Most of rule 316.14 is not needed if 316.22 [variable admirals] is not used. It would be sufficient to require admirals to be kept on ships with CR8 or more and not allow them to function on the ships listed in 316.146.

This paragraph is an option within the rule and as such has to be agreed on being used by both sides/everybody. Considering that you're going to use it to destroy the Tholians I really don't think you're going to get the Tholians permission to use it. Of course, I could be wrong, they could have developed a death wish since they arrived here and blew half of the Klingon fleet out of space.

An interesting thought occurs: Does Advanced Deficit Spending (ADS) significantly improve the chances of capturing Tholia? Consider: Any assault on Tholia is going to result in dozens of dead ships. Let's assume, for the sake of easy math, that 90 ships will end up dying. Now the Depot Level Repair rules will recover about 15 of them, so the Klingons will be due salvage on about 75 ships.

We can conservatively estimate that the average salvage value of those ships will be about 1 EP each, so the Klingons will have on the order of 75 EP carried into the next turn just from operations in Tholian space.

Now, one can spend that much money in a number of ways: a brief orgy of repairs is probably a leading candidate. However, the ADS rules allow you to "pre-spend" that money; run up 60 EP or so of debt before doing the assault and repay the loan out of salvage.

This way you leverage the losses that you're pretty much guaranteed to take into resources that you can use to increase your chances of victory. (The options are legion: production overrides of key classes (FCRs, carriers); buying extra fighter factors (paradoxically reducing the amount of salvage you'll get); PRDs and base upgrades for extra repair capacity after the fact; getting WYN trade started; overbuilds; shipyards so you don't have to overbuild; simple repairs to keep more ships active; building "off-schedule" units (PDU, MB, Monitors, Auxes, etc.); there are certainly others.)

Obviously, 60 EP is a drop in the bucket compared to what you'd like to spend, natch, but you get the use of it many turns before you'd otherwise. (I.e., early money is worth more than late money.)

Oh, and you'd better win the hex; 60 EP is not a pleasant amount of debt for the Klingons to carry (it really hurts when exhaustion sets in). (Let alone the problem that you'll have handed the Tholians 90EP of salvage.

(Note: Clearly this works in relation to any battle where you know you're going to take a serious beating. It's just easiest to do the math for the Klingon assault on
Tholia.

(Note2: The amount of 60 EPs to borrow was arrived at by assuming that about 20% of the salvage received would go to "pay back" the interest costs incurred leaving 80% to pay back actual debt; 80% of 75 = 60. Also, the Klinks can only carry about 70 EP of debt before getting thwacked with extra exhaustion [(447.21) and subsequent] penalties, and I want to protect against enemy action (60 EP of debt implies that they would have to lose 23 EP off base economy before problems happen.)

By David Slatter (Davidas) On Tuesday, April 25, 2006 - 04:28 am: Edit

I generally allow free movement of (non-variable) admirals between ships of CR8+ as those ships nearly always have a big bridge or a separate flag bridge. There is no reason to disallow movement of admirals within these bounds as the admiral would choose the most appropriate ship to command from. After all, the "no ADMs on tugs" is artificial, mainly to prevent variable ADM abuse, and yet that rule carries over when playing with non-variable ADMs.

In the case I showed, the ADM would almost certainly be on the commanding drone tug "in real life" - the ship can hang back effectively, lobbing drones and providing EW. But the rules don't allow that at all, and thus he goes on the next best CR8+ ship in the battleforce - the D6U.

Another problem if you are adhering to this rule dogmatically is that suppose you have a Fed DN+ and a padded CVB group. You want to use your ADM, but don't want to risk your DN+ because of maulers and high enemy compot. Are you saying that the ADM gets rammed onto the DN+, and I can't use the ADM unless the DN+ is in the battleforce? That's clearly ludicrous. The ADM would hop onto the CVB, where there is a flag bridge, and command from there.

It's much better to simply allow the free movement of ADMs on CR8+. The problems with ADM assignment (and no realistic way to deal with it) is the main reason why I don't play with variable ADMs. The "real life" situation would have the highest ranking ADM taking command of the fleet most likely to fight the biggest battle. But that conflicts with the players desire to sideline said admiral if he is poor. The game effectively makes the bad admirals rank over the good ones. The whole thing is a mire which would take pages and pages of rules to sort out properly. Such rules would probably force you to use a -1 ADM in a big homeworld battle if he was highest ranking, which would really shaft the unlucky race that drew him that way. Nobody wants that. The current rules allow you to put him elsewhere into a backwater, provided his DN goes with him. Shunting the senior ADM, even if poor, to a backwater, would simply not be done.

So, as the Tholian, I would allow the Klingons to move around the (non-variable) ADM as they saw fit on CR8+ ships. They could even put the ADM on a CR6 ship if
they wanted to (although he needs CR8+ to give his +1 bonus). If this makes me slightly more likely to lose, then at least I have the satisfaction that the klingon ADMs were not handicapped into being stupid.

All that makes sense, David. There's only one problem; it's not playing by the rules of the game.

In "Real Life" you'd be correct, the admiral would lead from the ship that would have the best chance to survive the current tactical situation. However, as this isn't RL, what JKD said.

That being said, I put up a post on the Q+A thread that you may be interested in. It probably will not be ruled legal but I like to let people use it as it adds a little something to the game. The post was on 4/17/06 5:28 AM.

Reforming the admiral rules wouldn't take pages and pages, either. GDW's Fifth Frontier War has admirals with varying effectiveness and their rules on ranking and which admiral must be in command at any given time both work and don't run into multiple pages.

But are there any rules to stop you exiling your poor admirals?

There should instead be rules for your poor admirals to become better. Have all admirals start out poor, and if they survive, they get better. Would probably have to look at the kill rates of admirals, or by 175 all admirals might be +1's.

When random events finally come into play ADM can be in there as a casualty/sudden retirement. (One option for helping them turn over).

There should be more turn over and some kind of randomness to them because even the best leaders can make a mistake and have things go poorly (could be due to (self) overconfidence, lack of information, mis-information, poor subordinate performance, some kind of new tech/strategy, or just plain old bad luck.)

Either way you go the variable ADMs rules almost never used in a game (at least the games posted here) so both of you guys are correct in discussing a way to
make some changes to the existing.

Kevin, The problem is not all officer's become better with Promotion. The American Civil War shows this. Ambrose Burnsides was a competent Corp Commander but a complete failure as an Army Commander.

A -1 isn't a bad admiral, just a poor battle commander; he might be a logistic wizard, or a great planner, he just can't react fast enough on an operational/tactical scale. To answer David's question about exiling poor admirals, no, the FFW rules don't prevent anyone from exiling poor admirals. To my mind, there shouldn't be any, either; there are lots of examples in history of poor battle commanders holding high rank but being assigned to "sectors better suited to their talent/august personage", why not in F&E?

I'd rather have a -1 admiral in a fleet rather than none at all; that extra ship can (and has, in our games) make up for the -1 penalty. Sure, you suffer somewhat facing a 0 admiral, and it is icky facing a +1 with your -1, but thems the breaks, too. I quite like the requirement that an admiral must be on the largest ship, both in terms of CR and compot, as it tends to prevent exiling of the -1s, forcing a player to either use that dreadnought (or, God forbid, battleship) and take the -1 hit, or go without the big ship. Sometimes you just have to go with the huy that's there, not the one you wish you had.

Lar, there are rules for turnover and they are quite random and have produced some rather fun, if nasty, consequences in my ftf games. You'd be surprised how often that 6 comes up each turn.

There is nothing optional in 316.14 under that note. It simply states that a CR8 ship or higher is sufficient to use an admiral, taking into account 316.146. 316.146 is the part of 316.14 that you can not ignore when using non-variable admirals.

Zargan

It being a NOTE instead of being simply stated makes it an optional rule.

Also, how the rules read means that you can put them on FFs and command fleets of FFs if you want. It wouldn't be too hard to manage this either as long as you don't mind attacking a small target or having a chance of losing a DN.

For example: If the Klingons B-10 gets a -1 admiral on it, group it with a dozen F5s and then send it after a target somewhere, it doesn't matter where or what
as long as they can kill it or will not be pursued from the fight. In the first shot cripple the B-10. Then by 316.146 and 316.144 A, he must transfer to a F5. It's even easier when you have HDWs, then you can stick him in a real fight and have him transfer to the HDW(C) when crippled. Then once he's "Out of the Way" you can have him command your pin fleets or send him on a suicide mission so you can draw a new one.

Mike, the CR8 or higher is if you are using the non-variable rules.

If you are using variable, then they must be on the highest CR in the fleet.

Sorry, changed the post slightly while you were replying.

Also, that's not what the rules say. It says "it would be SUFFICIENT TO REQUIRE" that's not a standard rule, that's optional by the wording.

Yes, by the rules you must put them on the biggest CR ship made on that turn, but they don't have to stay on that ship if you do things to move them off. See above post.

K, Mike, whatever ya like is fine by me.

In my experience, any optional rule either as the word 'optional' in the title of the rule, or spells out explicitly that the rule is optional. Advanced rules ar e not the same as optional rules, though I am unclear as to why they are differentiated as I've never played without them.

As a note, there are only two rules I can find in the 2k rules, and I am fairly certain you'll only find one or two optional rules in any other expansion, and most of those deal with Orions.

Aww, cmon. Ya can't end it like that.
Good point, I just posted a question for Nick on the subject. Maybe I'm wrong but I guess it'll have to wait.

Mike, actually, you're wrong as to the transfer rules for admirals, especially when using variables. Yes, in your example, that admiral could stay on that F5 as long as that F5 never found itself in a hex with anything with a bigger command rating and which wasn't on the prohibited list. As soon as the F5 found its way into a force with even an F5L, the admiral goes to the F5L, and so on. All admirals automatically transfer to the highest CR ship, with -1's having priority.

Which really sucks when he's on a B10. A fact my ftf Coalition opponent knows all too well 😞

That's my point. As soon as he's on that F5 he never gets near any bigger ship. And if you can do without him for another turn you can send him in all alone to go kill that Starbase in his F5 so you can draw another next turn. And with a little luck the one you draw will be better, even if it's "only" a zero. Yes, you will be losing a F5, but well worth it if you can get a better admiral than a -1.

The problem with this is that 316.32 says the replacement Admiral is done on your production phase at the capital and immediatly assumes command of the largest command rating ship. To get him on an F5 would require you to not produce anything larger than an F5 or activate any Mothball ships or IWR if appropriate.

It's a lot of effort, either producing nothing larger than a frigate, or conspiring to lose enough ships and/or send a valuable command hull off with some crap, to solve a problem that ends up having far less a negative effort than that which would go into fixing the problem.

Micahel - That kind of action to get rid of a poor admiral is why it became an optional rule. During the playtests, people would go to great and extreme lengths to get rid of a poor admiral

I'm just recalling the history of the Army of the Potomac and it's carousel of commanders. What if each level of admiral had a shelf life, for lack of a better term. So a poor admiral is retired after two turns, an average after four, and superior (can't recall the term in the rules) admiral after six.
Or, if you still want to have randomness in the retirement/death, change the die roll to 2 dice. A poor admiral retires/dies on a 6 or above. An average on a 9 or above. A +1 retires/dies on a 12 or above. Each turn, the threshold number for each admiral is reduced by 1. So after time, even a great admiral would be forced back to the pool. The problem I see with that solution is that it creates a bunch of record keeping.

By John Doucette (Jkd) On Thursday, April 27, 2006 - 12:38 pm: Edit

The problem I see with having a variable retirement time and/or an increasingly unlikely die roll is that it skews things too much toward good results. There's no reason a -1 should retire/be killed/whatever any sooner or later than a +1. That -1 might be the Grand Admiral of the Fleet and that +1 might be an Acting Commodore.

By Stan Taylor (Nicephorus) On Thursday, April 27, 2006 - 12:51 pm: Edit

Does anyone purchase any auxillaries?

I manage to use the at-start ones just fine. But I don't find enough utility in them to buy them, especially if it would mean cancelling regular ships or forestalling repairs.

For units on the defensive, aux's, especially the carriers, are no good for hit and fade operations that the Z and H normally do so well. For the offensive, it's hard for aux's to keep up at times.

By Dave Butler (Dcbutler) On Thursday, April 27, 2006 - 01:17 pm: Edit

The problem, such as I see it, is that "everyone" is terrified of the effect a -1 admiral has. I figure that, rather than have retirement, tone down the effect and the problem goes away without the need for extra rolls. My initial attempt would be to say that the admiral modifies the VBIR roll instead of the combat roll (which changes a "+/-1 all the time" to "+/-1 two-thirds of the time", and caps the extremes (can't have VBIR put you down two and have the admiral drop you further)).

By John Robinson (John_R) On Thursday, April 27, 2006 - 01:18 pm: Edit

The only auxes I buy are SAF - and even those I use the existing FTL/FTS to reduce the costs involved.

I have successfully used Kzinti auxes (of all varieties) to retake planets within 3 hexes of 1401. The key is to make sure the Coalition reserves are pinned/tied up elsewhere. Otherwise, I agree that they are just fodder for a capital assault that is going poorly for the defense.

By Bill Schoeller (Bigbadbill) On Thursday, April 27, 2006 - 01:23 pm: Edit

Aux's are best used for races that are on the defense and have lots of extra income.
In the case of the Feds they can be very useful!

I built a few extra as the Feds in my current game. They increase defenses at SB's and can be used to bring lots of cheap fighters to a battle that you overkill because you have to win i.e taking back that key planet that would give supply to the Coalition to take the capital.

I used 2 LAV's to run from the SW capital complex SB to the minor planet within range of the northern neutral zone for about 10 turns in a row (I needed to recapture the planet to keep him out of supply for any capital assault, and used the fighters as extra pinning/capital defense forces on my turn).

I would not choose to buy an aux instead of existing production (it is more efficient to buy 5 frigates rather than an LAV), but if you have extra points it is a useful consideration.

Finding ways to use auxiliary units is a big way to maximize your races effectiveness.

By Alan De Salvio (Alandwork) on Thursday, April 27, 2006 - 02:35 pm: Edit

Auxiliaries are less useful now that raids can kill them easily. I use them in conjunction with primary fleet trains (which means at a supply point with the FRDs) or defensive points, as the carriers provide cheap additional pinning capacity and function as FCRs. The troop auxiliaries are very useful at planetary defensive sites where your opponent may attempt a marine attack, thanks to the marine support rules. But I haven't built many new auxiliaries of any type - I never have enough cash as it is.

By Michael Lui (Michaellui) on Thursday, April 27, 2006 - 03:15 pm: Edit

Nashvillen

The replacement admiral is after the current -1 dies and is another unknown admiral, not necessarily the same -1. When the ship he is on gets crippled DURING the turn he transfers to the next biggest uncrippled ship in the hex. If that is an F5 then that's what he gets transferred to. On the NEXT turn if you send that F5 on a suicide run (or if your enemy attacks nearby him and you don't send anything else to defend) THEN you choose another admiral at random at the beginning of your NEXT turn.

JKD

Yes, you could "fix" the problem, but I didn't want to bring those rules up. This is just an "easy" fix for those people who REALLY don't want a -1 admiral on their B10 and have a +1 just waiting around for it.
John R

You don't have to increase the chances of retirement, that's what the enemies E+S missions are for.

Dcbutler

I don't know about terrified, I usually don't worry about it UNLESS he's on a key ship (like a BB). At any other time I just send him off into the secondary theater of battle.

We've been toying with the idea of escorting our auxiliaries as a matter of course and using them for the initial break-in and/or the final defence. I've yet to build an auxiliary, other than replacement drone auxes, but the idea of maxing out auxCV production does have an appeal; they function as "combat FCRs" and when escorted serve as fairly good damage sponges (the large ones, anyway).

Other than trying to better utilize the at-start units, though, no, I've never seriously embarked on an auxiliary building program.

Yes, I do build some auxiliaries, but not many.

Auxiliary scouts: one of my prime choices for the opening game alliance ... they're in dire need of more scout coverage, and the aux can stay at the starbase, knowing the enemy is coming to you.

Auxiliary drone ship: Never. Way too expensive for a unit that will die the first time it fires its drones.

Auxiliary troop ship: Never. Too much money, not enough utility. They're usually too slow to attack with, and the defender doesn't need more than you start with.

Auxiliary carriers: Heh ... here's the thing ... if you're a carrier race, you don't want to be putting free fighters onto an aux, and you can't afford to waste the cash on one. If you're not a carrier race, they just don't help much. Hence, it depends on who I'm playing and how starved for cash I am. As the Lyrans, I just may ... heck, I may even put free fighters into it in the opening game, as there's not much else to do with them. As the Klingons, I also might ... the carriers you're presented with in the opening game really are that bad. The Feds, sure ... you're desperate for something to do with your money that will help stave off the coalition.
It's basically a case of: Nice toy, can't afford it. For some things (Klingon assault of Tholia, Klingon/Lyran FRD park, capitol defence, starbase speedbumping, occupying an enemy capitol) ... yeah, they're pretty good. The only problem is that they cost a lot more money than you get value out of them. In almost every case where you'd want an AUX, you're generally better off setting up a PDU/FDU if you can spare the tug time.

Mark

Now, some of that is hyperbole. In the Backdraft game I'm playing it was four rounds until I killed all four of the AuxD. So three of them survived more than one round...

Mark

The first thing I do with AuxDBs is to strat them to the Capitol as they are released. If the Klingons/Lyrans want to shoot them while they're doing support over 20 PDUs and a SB I cheer very loudly as they're not shooting 4 PDUs each time they kill one. Then I build replacements to keep letting him kill them instead of PDUs. However, I don't build anymore once the SB is dead.

AuxCVs are also good for the Kzinti if he's not going to take your capitol in 1 shot. And I'm not sure on the capitol hex partial retreat rules if they can do a partial retreat, if they can then as soon as each one is empty it goes off map and strats back on on the Kzinti turn so you can get maximum value out of them. Or they just stay off map and have the fighters react to any assault on the capitol. You can even have them do fighter strikes from offmap against any ship/fleet that happens to be adjacent to your offmap area.

Michael,

That would work except the (302.742E) says slow units cannot conduct a partial retreat out of a capital hex unless all defending units do so.

Also, units off-map can't react on map (207.24), and Auxes can't do offensive fighter strikes (319.13).

Ryan

That's why I said I wasn't sure, I thought I might have read that but I wasn't near my rulebooks.
Dave

Darn. I guess they just have to stay in the Capitol hex and retreat with everything else when it's taken.

By Mark Ermenc (Mermenc) on Sunday, April 30, 2006 - 02:40 pm

Escort the SAVs with a couple frigates (Ad-hoc if you must) ... then you can take the damage somewhere if he just drops the damage on your slow units. Otherwise, all your slow units are dead ... auxs don't have the hit points to absorb what a real fleet can do.

(This is assuming you play with a house rule that limits the number of plus points the attacker can take with him into pursuit. Otherwise, self-kill all your slow units over the capitol, and target any fast ship you see to give your retreating fleet a 1/6 chance of survival against the 30 or so plus points you will face.)

The reason I say to escort the SAVs and not the LAVs is because the LAVs are probably going up unescorted onto the line to provide 13 points of density (and take 16 damage), in the hopes that the enemy directs on them, drawing fire from the PDUs.

Though frankly I usually use the auxs over starbases and planets as a throw-away force, since I don't have to worry about them being captured. They speed-bump starbases I can't afford to leave a real fleet to guard, padding whatever garbage ships I can spare for the defence fleet (POLs, spare FFs, "extra" vanilla hulls I'll never have the time/ep to upgrade, G-ships, etc).

I'd rather leave my real fleets on the capital so that the capital lives and the starbases are attacked, and fight it out over the starbase while the capitol pounds out PDU. There are few better places to put a reserve than an undamaged capitol, since the planetary PDU fighters have to be pinned out before the reserve can be.

By John Doucette (Jkd) on Monday, May 01, 2006 - 07:55 pm

I prefer to put my real fleet at the capital, since landing them at the capitol tends to limit their usefulness somewhat ;)

By Marc Michalik (Kavik_Kang) on Thursday, June 15, 2006 - 04:56 am

I'm not really posting anymore, but have been reading and have really developed a great interest in F&E, a game I only ever played once when the very first version first came out. I'd really love to play the new F&E with all the expansions, it sounds really amazing.

Below are two posts from about a year ago. I instantly thought of a great alternative to this percieved problem. I say percieved problem because I can very
easily logically justify the way that pinning currently works, on the other hand, I can see the point below and the idea it inspired me too have does seem like a much better and more fun and even 'realistic' way of handling pinning...

***
"Mark Ermenc (Mermenc) on Friday, May 06, 2005 - 12:58 pm: Edit

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.

By Paul Bonfanti (Bonfanti) on Friday, May 06, 2005 - 01:53 pm: Edit

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."
***
As I said, I've only ever actually played F&E once and it was a very different
game, but with a lifetime of experience with SFB and familiarity with F&E, I do
have a decent understanding of F&E despite not really having actually played it.
So maybe I am missing something obvious, but if not this might be a vast
improvement to how pinning works.

What if each round of combat counted as a hex of movement? If I remember
right you move 6 in operational movement, so for example if a force moved 2
hexes and were pinned, it could move three more hexes if one round of combat
were fought, 2 more if 2 rounds were fought, 1 more if 3 rounds were fought, or
would be truly "pinned" after 3 rounds?

As someone who has designed games since he was a little kid, this seems very
obvious too me, which makes me think I am missing something that I would
know if I had actual play experience. If not, it seems like a great improvement
too me.

Marc

I think many have considered your idea. The problem is tempo and turn phase.
It only works if you are fighting as you are moving the fleets. Recording
"movement points before pinned" would be unacceptable to most players,
even though different ships in the stack may have moved a different number of
movement points.

If the combat and movement phases are simultaneous to make this work, then
you would need an entire rule rewrite.

Ps I tried a "running battle" idea myself. It basically had a similar concept, except
that the turn phases were maintained. Extra movement and combat happened in
the combat phase as each battle was resolved. The number of rounds each
combat had been through was recorded and interfaced with the number of
retreats one side made along with the size of the fleets involved. Depending on
those three, you rolled to see if you got another round of combat.

This could result in one side retreating several hexes and the other pursuing them
into those hexes - i.e. the combat "moved", and possibly restarted if it entered
another disputed hex.

It was still a fairly extreme suggestion, but at least it maintained phase order.
If you choose to remain in the hex adjacent to the target over the turn you can still move in and attack the target hex on the next turn -- its all a matter of choices.

By Marc Michalik (Kavik_Kang) on Friday, June 16, 2006 - 01:16 pm: Edit

David: Ah, I considered that it might require some record keeping but never even thought of the fact that ships in the same hex may have moved a different number of hexes to get there. That easily makes it way too much record keeping to really work. I thought there was probably some obvious reason like that that nobody had brought it up, since it seems such an obvious solution. It seems as though it would work well on a lot of levels if not for the record keeping:-(

Chuck: Hi:-)

By Dave Butler (Dcbutler) on Friday, June 16, 2006 - 04:26 pm: Edit

Since a stack that's absorbed into a moving stack loses movement points, there's very little recordkeeping needed: just note the smallest amount of remaining movement in the hex.

By Kevin Howard (Jarawara) on Saturday, June 17, 2006 - 08:41 pm: Edit

Yeah, but if the two groups don't absorb into each other, wouldn't they be tracked separately for purposes of their available movement remaining?

I mean, there's nothing in the rule that says one group of ships can't just fly over the next, and not combining the instant they were in the same hex together. Only if they move together do they combine (and use the lowest remaining movement points of the combined fleets).

By Dave Butler (Dcbutler) on Saturday, June 17, 2006 - 10:54 pm: Edit

*sigh* You deem the Phasing Player's stacks to have merged the instant you start doing calculations for combat (command ships, minimum force requirements, etc.).

By Kevin Howard (Jarawara) on Sunday, June 18, 2006 - 02:21 am: Edit

*sigh right back at you* 😛

And this discussion is a proposal to combine combat and movement in a totally new way, where combat would occur before movement was finished, which means that the other related rules would have to be reviewed and rewritten.

It might even mean that combat would be fought with the stacks being separate, in order to preserve the movement points of least-moved fleet.

***Note, I don't like the proposal, I'm just saying that we're in uncharted territory now, and it could require a new re-write of alot of rules.
Look, if you want a complicated mess, I can't stop you from making one. However, it's possible to have simple rules that lead to a rich and interesting game (c.f., chess and go). There's a lot of people here that seem to forget that, and suggest monstrously complex rules that'd add another year to the game simply in the figuring out how they apply in situation X.

Don't go looking to borrow trouble is all I'm saying.

(Also, you (generic) need to look at the typical situation: some portion of a fleet will be pinned out one hex away from their target. Hence, it might be sufficient to require a certain number of combat rounds is required to prevent the phasing forces from being allowed to take one hex forward movement.)

Regardless, this doesn't belong in Strategy Discussion, so I'll stop.

General Question to the Masses

Exactly how bad is it to be doing a no Dir Damage policy with the Zin. Then Bail and start DD'n the D6Ms?

My instance:::

My Zinti didn't direct at the Turn 4, Klink Mallers over their Home world. The coalation Devistated the HW, and Skeedatled. There were enough SE's at the FRD park to pin the Zin out.

The Coalation had an interesting repair bill
120+ Econ. There are still something like
5xB, 4xCA, 4xCW, 9xD5, 3xF5Q, 2x3D6V etc
that are waiting to be repaired next turn.
From the Zinti theatre.

Looked good here.

Then the Mallers came back on turn 5, directing on a cruiser a turn over the HW. (PDU's destroyed turn 4)

The 5th turn I did direct at Mallers and a Tug+SP in line.

The coalation repair facilities suddenly are able to catch up. (108 dmg lost to directing)
And they have 25 or so extra Econ to help pay for it.

I think my strategic error was. Taking a direct never policy. Then, just when the
Repair facilities were starting to get clogged up.
I bailed and directed on the Mallers.
Reducing the Repair $$, and providing Salvage.

By Michael Lui (MichaelLui) on Thursday, November 23, 2006 - 03:12 pm: Edit

I generally don't direct on ships over homeworlds/SBs until pursuit. But you have to go all the way if you do this because, as you found out, they can catch up on their repairs if you change back to directing. And you must also do all you can to kill FRDs if you adopt this strategy.

By Alan De Salvio (Alandwork) on Monday, November 27, 2006 - 08:12 pm: Edit

If you just drop the damage you are trying to hold the hex (save the capital), since you are trying to drive your opponent off. But you don't permanently reduce your opponent's ship equivalents that way, so your success is short-term (assuming what you crippled can be repaired, and the Coalition usually can repair a bunch). However, if you couple not directing with an aggressive attack policy, particularly against vulnerable points, like FRD parks, you can be successful over the long-term. In fact, this strategy will allow you to burn your fighters twice (on your turn AND their turn), which is of course the idea. This is the vanilla Alliance strategy, as repeatedly stated in the rulebook itself.

By Roger D. Morgan, Jr. (Sonofkang) on Thursday, December 07, 2006 - 07:55 pm: Edit

I originally posted this over in "General Discussions" but perhaps it will do better to be here. I repost it in the hope it will generate more conversation and then more topics soon as well:

"Lately, as I read through the F&E threads, I was reminded of something I liked from the early days of Captain's Log that I thought would be nice to have for F&E - namely the Academy. We have many discussions on rule corrections and clarifications, why some rules need to be changed or not, but not so much about how we use the rules we have. Granted we have TACNOTES and some discourse here and there, but I was looking for something more like the old "Academy" articles, but for F&E; call it a "War College."

I would like to pick various rules (I am sure everyone out there will have one or two favorites) and discuss it and its implications from all kinds of points of view. I know what the rules say, but I would to exchange ideas on how they are implemented. What I mean is do you use the rule (or not) for the same reasons I do? And does it vary by race or time of the game?

I think this would be a very good way to stimulate discussion, but also to get the "I never thought of it that way" lights to go off. With the length of time it takes to complete a game, the decisions made in your game may be interesting to those who chose to do something different in the same situation. Reading about those choices could vilify or justify decisions made in your own games. Additionally, with all the new players joining and old players returning, it would be a good way to get up to speed on "how things are done" with the new rules. (And, if for
nothing else, I am tired of seeing so many dormant threads on the F&E site.)

I would like to propose taking a rule and examining it tenaciously, examining whether or how you use it with lots of good examples. When the discussion slows or the rule has been thoroughly wrung out, we can pick another one to pursue. Maybe this will even inspire some good TACNOTES or, at the very least, give me another good trick to surprise my opponent with...

To start with, I choose two rules that are related and carry similar considerations in the decision to exercise them or not - (431.3) Overbuilds, Overproduction and (450.3) Production Overrides

In my experience, which is primarily Coalition, I never use the rule. I seldom have the money to even consider it, between the huge build costs, base upgrades, and repairs I find necessary to sustain a successful offensive campaign. Aside from the cost, however, I really don't find myself in such dire need of a certain hull that I can justify spending that kind of money. Also, as the Coalition at least, I find that the large numbers of hulls they build gives me the flexibility I need to meet the specialized hull requirements without resorting to these two rules. Could I use more maulers, carriers, scouts, or drone ships? Heck yeah! You can never have enough hulls (or so my Admirals tell me). However, the bean counters need better reasons than I have come up with so far to justify the extra expense of overproduction or production overrides.

When do you use them? Is it primarily an Alliance friendly rule? What circumstances would make you decide "I really must have another one of those hulls - right now!" despite the cost?"

By Scott Burleson (Burl) On Friday, December 08, 2006 - 12:59 pm: Edit

I would say that it is a rare situation that you have the money to justify the extra expense. The only time I consistently overbuild is on turns 7 and sometimes 8 as the Fed player. I definitely need hulls and I definitely have more money than I can spend on these turns. I usually just overbuild FFs for 6 points with the extra money, occasionally might overbuild an NCL. I have built as many as 6 on turn 7 by overbuilding. This was back in the mid 90s, though, before there were as many options as there are now with AO, PO, and SO. The last game I played, though, I still overbuilt 2FF with money left over.

By Kevin Howard (Jarawara) On Friday, December 08, 2006 - 03:28 pm: Edit

The only time I’ve found myself overbuilding is when I was winning so big that I had cash to burn, or when I was playing an alternate scenario (Reptilicon Revenged sees lots of overbuilding). I would think the first couple of Fed turns would be the most likely to see overbuilding, if the Fed player thinks he desperately needs just a few more ships.

If and when I overbuild, I prefer the War Cruiser over the Frigate. I don’t need
the extra hulls as much as I need usable hulls, and the CW hull is usable in so many ways throughout the war.

I have been considering a proposal for a new rule, where when you overbuild, it's considered to be done outside of the shipyard (as opposed to simply being beyond the shipyard's capacity, it would actually be built elsewhere). Therefore, if you overbuilt a ship, you could place it anywhere you had a base or planet. If you could add a few more ships directly on the front line, would it be worth the doubled price tag?

The only thing that's kept me from adding that proposal into my games is that the typical newbie player would use that rule all the time, and thus quickly run out of money.

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**By Peter D Bakija (Bakija) on Friday, December 08, 2006 - 04:11 pm:**

Yeah, generally, overbuilding comes up a lot in alternate (i.e. non general war) scenarios like 4 Powers War, Reptilicon Revenged, and the Fed-Kzinti war, as during non general war times, empires tend to have a lot more money than build schedules, and not much else to spend the money on.

During the General War scenario, as noted most empires have too much other stuff to spend money on, such that overbuilding ships is generally not a worthwhile investment, with the Feds on T7 and 8 as a possible exception (where they might consider churning out a bunch of over built FFs)

-Peter

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**By Sandro Colacito (Sandro) on Saturday, December 09, 2006 - 05:09 pm:**

Overbuilding in one or two specific situations might by a valid option.

1) My friend Mike has always tried to convince me to overbuild as the Feds especially when not attacked T7. You could easily save 180EP turns 7-9 and then overbuild like 30xFF. Personally I’ve always opted for defenses, max conversions, extra CVSs, etc but it would make for an interesting T10 assault having an extra 30+ FFs. I’d be interested to hear if anyone has ever tried overbuilding on such a scale.

2) A similar tactic on a smaller scale could be tried with Gorn DDs in an East Wind scenario when they have some extra $ to burn turns 1-3. Overbuilding 10xDDs early on might prove more useful than adding max PDUs on Ghadar.

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**By Robert Padilla (Zargan) on Monday, December 11, 2006 - 09:01 am:**

Except that the Feds cannot overbuild unless at full War.

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**By Lawrence Bergen (Lar) on Monday, December 11, 2006 - 09:22 am:**

Rob: I am not sure Sandro meant overbuilding during turns 7-9 but rather saving the EPs for a Turn 10 overbuild.
Sandro: I have been overbuilding in the 4PW scenario every turn thus far at a pretty good clip. In the GW I have not overbuilt like this for as you say there are 'other things' to spend money on.

Lar, he actually said when not attacked Turn 7. Otherwise I would not have mentioned it.

Sandro wrote:
>>You could easily save 180EP turns 7-9 and then overbuild like 30xFF.>>

I'm guessing he means "save 180 EPs on turns 7-9, and then on T10 (when you presumably go to full war), overbuild 30xFFs."

-Peter

Yes he means saving the points til turn 10 and then over build like mad so as to blunt the turn 10 over run. I say this as the person who planted the idea in his head. =)

Well yeah that would work

Overbuilding with the Lyrans.

Occasionally, an overbuilt CW is useful. Take a turn's production when you need a CVL, CWE/LTT, STJ, CWS, and a CL substitution for a BC conversion. No crippled CWs back at the capitol, must take everything from new production. Not so crucial now with AO as Lyrans get four CW production slots as opposed to the three they used to get. Also the CWE/LTT is probably the least critical item on the list and could be foregone.

Generally, an overbuild just not is so critical as something else one could do with the dough, although the Lyrans are pretty flush with cash.

Not that I have played a game that far ahead, but how about the X-ships? An extra one or two of those ahead of schedule could get you that full battle/pursuit force. Note that the X-ship rule in AO says can only overbuild one X-ship per turn; however, it can be higher than the 8 hull or so restriction on other overbuilds.

HUMOR: Really, though, overbuilds work best for the Klingons. Instead of that silly B-10, overbuild 14 E4s!. One can potentially get 105 ship-turns of E4s for the
average cost of one B-10. One E4 one turn, one more the next turn makes two, one more the next turn makes three,...over fourteen turns.....just imagine the pinning potential against all those pesky kitties.

By Bill Schoeller (Bigbadbill) ON Thursday, December 14, 2006 - 10:25 pm: Edit

For the Feds overbuild a CA, and convert it to an x ship at the capital!

By Damon Robert Anderson (Rihan704) ON Friday, December 15, 2006 - 10:36 am: Edit

Yes, that sounds like a good idea. Kinda like the Lyrans getting a 14 cost DN by building a CA and converting it rather than building a DN outright. Keep in mind the ??>CX conversion is a major one though and requires a SBX.

The DDX sounds like a good candidate for overbuilding, too. It can't be converted from anything so the Capital starbase slots remain open for CXs. The DDX is a 10 compot ship, so one gets the full mauler potential out of it and it can still be used in a battle group. However I bet it is unlikely that the Feds would run out of standard production slots for the NCL/DDX and would have to resort to overbuilds.

Can the new Strike Cruisers from SO convert to CXs? Would it be the cheaper two-step conversion type?

By Trent Telenko (Ttelenko) ON Sunday, December 17, 2006 - 02:18 pm: Edit

>For the Feds overbuild a CA, and convert it to >an x ship at the capital!

1) Conversions of overbuilt ship require double the cost for the conversions.

2) That still counts as your single overbuilt X-ship per turn.

You are looking at a cost of 16 EP plus 12 XTP for the CX versus 24 XTP.

That is not a good bargain.

By Dale Lloyd Fields (Dylkha) ON Sunday, December 17, 2006 - 04:05 pm: Edit

I have never played F&E without the expansions so I have almost always have more options than money. For that reason I have never overbuilt within a General War scenario. However, I should point out two scenarios where overbuilding came in handy. The first is in non-GW era scenarios like Kevin, Peter, and Sandro pointed out. I played the Gorn-Fed war and was routinely overbuilding more F-FFs than regular ships on my schedule. The second was in the Backdraft scenario. The first time the group I was playing with tried this, the Coalition had significantly depleted my (Kzinti) FF escorts. Had I realized that POLs couldn't be adhocs, I would have had to overbuild FFs. The second time we played it, Dan Knipfer took the Kzinti and overbuilt some crazy number of FFs (10xFF?) on T0. This served to convince me (the Klingons) just not to even start directing on escorts.
This is not to take away from the overbuilding discussion. I just worked this up for my own interest and figured I might as well post it. The Klingons are the ones to benefit most strongly from additional survey ships since they are the Empire with the fewest at-start survey ships. The following table includes the survey rolls assuming a roll of 3.5 for each survey ship (average). It does not include the effects of risky survey (542.27). The Klingons would be greatly advantaged by doing this early as it adds colonies to existing provinces which greatly increases their OffMap economic base. I did not include the HDW-Q as it arrives too late in the game for the Klingons to worry about it (and it means you would have to leave a survey slot open while waiting for it). I did not include the effect of a Prime Team which I think benefits the Klingons tremendously, again because of their limited number of survey ships. Heck, it benefits the ZH very well. The table is arranged as follows: the first column is the turn, the next four columns are the survey point totals for the original 2 survey ships as well as the totals if you send 1, 2, or 3 additional survey ships to the OffMap. The next four columns are the provinces those number of survey ships would find, and the last four columns are the EP the Klingons would derive from those provinces. In all cases the original 2x survey ships is given as a reference point. For the additional ship EP totals, I charged the Klingons 8 EP for each of the survey ships (5 conversion, 3 logistics) but not for the cost of the hull itself. I built the survey ships at the earlist possible times (T1, T2, T4). EP totals are cumulative, and include the effects of economic exhaustion. I still have the spreadsheet, so if anyone wants to see this information expressed differently, let me know.

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By Dale Lloyd Fields (Dylkha) on Monday, December 18, 2006 - 05:20 pm: Edit

This is a great thing about the board. I didn't realize that Trent's interpretation of the overbuilding rule is the actual rule. I had always assumed (yeah, I know) that the rule was worded such that overbuilt substitutions cost the double amount like the D6D for \((8+3) \times 2 = 22\) EP. I didn't realize that it applied to conversions of overbuilt ships as well, but I looked it over and heck if that isn't what it says in black and white. Again, this is why I like this board.

By Dale Lloyd Fields (Dylkha) on Tuesday, December 19, 2006 - 01:57 am: Edit

<sigh> Since I don't have anything better to do, here is the survey totals for the Gorn. Everything is the same except I've added three columns to the far right. They are the EP bonus you get in comparison to not buying any survey ships.

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Kitties! Lyrans or Kzinti!

By Dale Lloyd Fields (Dylkha) on Tuesday, December 19, 2006 - 02:26 am: Edit
Okay, the Hydrans are a little funny. Mainly because Hydran survey duty gets screwed by (542.16). The earliest they can build another survey ship is Y171-T6 (the PIC). Now, if the Hydrans have three spare cruisers to throw at survey duty, and don't mind not getting the pay off until after exhaustion, then their chart looks like:

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By Dale Lloyd Fields (Dylkha) On Tuesday, December 19, 2006 - 03:25 am: Edit
the Hydrans can wait until T14 to get a free survey ship. Then on T16 get another finally convert an LNH into survey mode. For 1 EP. With no infrastructure cost. So for the infrastructure. But it gets better. You see, if Y175 (T14), the Hydrans can Pegasus a year. So if the Hydrans want to wait, they only have to spend the 3 EP a survey variant of the Pegasus. I should point out that the Hydrans get one free Now, the Hydrans do have a little coolness. See, in Y174 (T12), they get the PGR, a survey variant of the Pegasus. I should point out that the Hydrans get one free Pegasus a year. So if the Hydrans want to wait, they only have to spend the 3 EP for the infrastructure. But it gets better. You see, if Y175 (T14), the Hydrans can finally convert an LNH into survey mode. For 1 EP. With no infrastructure cost. So the Hydrans can wait until T14 to get a free survey ship. Then on T16 get another
free survey ship, and switch an LNH into mission Q (LNHs are not survey ships so they don't count against the 1/year limit). This saves the Hydrans money in the short term, and saves the Hydrans three cruiser hulls for combat. However, the meager savings up front means their meager boon from survey ships is even more pitiful. For this reason, this strategy isn't really TacNote worthy.

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Romulans are weird. If newly built survey ships can help explore their outback, they get one province one turn early. However, the Roms don't have strat to the OffMap, so there is an additional delay in getting their survey going.

T10 - no change (2xSurvey in both 5117, 5216)
T11 - Survey ships in 5519, 5617, 2x5619
T12 - 3xOffMap, 6119, new one strats to 5819
T13 - 3xSurvey, 2xOffMap
T14 - 5xSurvey, last new strats to 5819
T15 - 5xSurvey, OffMap
T16 - 6xSurvey

Dylkha

Quote:
You see, if Y175 (T14), the Hydrans can finally convert an LNH into survey mode. For 1 EP. With no infrastructure cost. So the Hydrans can wait until T14 to get a free survey ship. Then on T16 get another free survey ship, and switch an LNH into mission Q (LNHs are not survey ships so they don't count against the 1/year limit).

Unfortunately 525.23Q specifies:

Quote:
Each race can only have one HDW-Q in operation at any given time...

So the Hydrans can only have 1 HDW-Q, not 2.
The Roms are also odd in that while most empires have a steep curve of diminishing results with each additional survey ship, the Roms get about twice as much extra cash from their second as from their first. Go figure.

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I'm off to bed. The Feds are complicated and I don't know how a chart would help. Also, the Feds are unusual in that the fractional improvement is less than everyone else's because the Feds have many survey ships already on duty and extras are perturbations upon their existing, rather than a serious multiplier (like the Klingons).

By Dale Lloyd Fields (Dylkha) on Tuesday, December 19, 2006 - 04:20 am: Edit

Michael

I know. The Hydrans would have 2xPGR and 1xLNH-Q at the end of T14. Two ships with 3 EP infrastructure cost, and 1 ship with a simple 1 EP mission switch-out cost.

T12 choose Guild PGR (1st Survey)
T14 choose Guild PGR (2nd Survey) + convert LNH-Q (3rd Survey)

By Dave Butler (Dcbutler) on Tuesday, December 19, 2006 - 12:00 pm: Edit

Dale,
While you're doing the whole spreadsheet thing, look into the possibility that races buy an additional survey ship (or more, for those with multiple SR types) at the earliest possible opportunity by using production override (to tie back in to a previous topic of conversation).

(You'll have to check the new survey rules to see if SR are a legal override target -- I don't have SO, and won't for probably at least a year, if ever. From the development version of the rules, I seem to remember that this worked okay for the Romulans, but I've lost the file.)

Note that the Roms can improve their rate of getting survey ships off-map (by one ship-turn, yay!) by sending a SPH off-map to act as a supply point. (Leaves on T10 and is active on T13.) Probably not worth the trouble, but it's legal.

By Dale Lloyd Fields (Dylkha) on Tuesday, December 19, 2006 - 01:41 pm: Edit

Dave

Production overrides: that's a good idea. I hadn't thought about that. That would allow the Klingons (for example) to get their third one out on T2. This would help everyone but the Hydrans (overrides don't change YIS). I'll run it tonight for the
Klingons. If it doesn't help them, it wouldn't help anyone. I can't find any comments in (431.3) that would necessarily keep survey ships from being overproduced (plus, the Gorn could overbuild CMs so they could override to get their MSR if they wanted to (not that they should since they have their CL-hulled SR).

I also like the SPH idea. As you say, probably not worth the trouble, but it completes the possibilities.

By Dale Lloyd Fields (Dylkha) on Tuesday, December 19, 2006 - 01:44 pm: Edit

Oh, and I had two errors in the text accompanying my Hydran charts. It should have said T12 get the PGR, T14 get the second PGR and the LNH-Q (not T14 and T16). My message at 4:20am has the correct dates. The chart is correct, I just erred on the accompanying text.

By Michael Lui (Michaellui) on Tuesday, December 19, 2006 - 04:26 pm: Edit

That's why I posted. Your text made it look like you were converting 2 LNH-Qs. But, alls well that ends well.

By Dave Butler (Dcbutler) on Tuesday, December 19, 2006 - 08:12 pm: Edit

Dale,

Note that the Lyrans, with their unique Tug/Survey ship design can't use the override to build them faster (tugs can't be overbuilt, and thus can't be overridden).

I've thought about the Romulan survey, and here's a neat (but probably worthless) trick one could play. Send the SPH to act as a supply point off-map, and also have a SPS survey 5318 (instead of 5519). Now, when province 5318 becomes active, the SB is built for free and you've got a SPS sitting on it. You convert the SPS to some other SP variant (or maybe make it into a FH), and allow the S-modules to go back to the pool. It can now StratMove to the front and go on reserve. On the next turn, one of your new production SP picks up the S-modules at the capital and StratMoves off-map to the SPH that's waiting there.

Doesn't get the survey done any faster, but does get you the use of a SP hull towards the front on the third turn after the Roms go active. This works because that SPS wasn't going to make it off-map anyway (six hexes from 5519 puts it in either 6118 or 6119). It does cost you an extra EP, however, to install the S-modules.

(One potential option would be to have the SPS become a SPH; you can now start building colonies or shipyards in the Romulan "back 40". Personally, I suspect you'll want it as an actual warship at the front, but who knows?)

By Dale Lloyd Fields (Dylkha) on Thursday, December 21, 2006 - 04:30 am: Edit

Okay, Klingons with the modification of production overrides:
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Okay, I redid the Klingon chart and added in the columns with the "bonus" amount of money you get from extra survey ships. I also added in two columns giving the money by overriding a survey ship (so the Klingons build 'em T1, T2, T2*) as well as that money compared to not overriding. You do get more money from the production override. Those two extra turns of survey lets you get several provinces one turn earlier which adds EP to the total. However, after paying off the 5 EP for the override, you end up only a total of 11.5 EP over the standard +3 Survey ships. Because doing this so early in the game sucks up so much money when the Klingons really need to be building maulers (2nd survey would eat up second major conversion) and crushing the Kzinti, I would recommend against it, even though you do technically come out in the black.

By Paul Howard (Raven) on Thursday, December 21, 2006 - 07:53 am: Edit

Dale

Loverly charts...one slight error I think (Certainly on the Klingons anyway)!

The turn you build the Extra Survey ship, it will not make a difference as it will take a turn to move there.

Secondly the Klingons can't enter Lyran space until turn 2, so the Survey ship built on turn 1 - will not be effective until turn 3 (turn 1 do nothing, turn 2 Strat Move Off Map, turn 3 - extra dice).

I think you have taken into accout the delay in building and then exploring - but not the about no entering until turn 2.

Basic Table!

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<td>14</td>
<td>17.5</td>
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<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>28</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>28</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Basically, the extra turn of survey brings half or so of the provinces in 1 turn earlier....

i.e. on your chart, the Klingons will be on +2 Ep's on turn 3 & 5, but it actually
would happen on turn 4 & 6 - so net 4 Ep's down after those 6 turns.

Probably still a good idea (if they can afford it), but building one on turn 1 is only worth it if your going to build more - otherwise you can delay the build until turn 2.

By Dale Lloyd Fields (Dylkha) On Thursday, December 21, 2006 - 06:46 pm: Edit

Paul

You're right. I read (542.22) to be Klingon survey ships, not just the original two which move through Lyran space on T1. But, I think this does open a door and I'll ask Nick about it. If the Klingons can move newly built SRs to the Far Stars on T1 as well it helps. If so, I realized the Klingons can get one additional turn by override by overriding on T1 instead of T2. That would (depending on Nick's ruling) give the Klingons 4 survey ships on T2. Going up to the maximum of 5 on T3.

I did try at least to factor in the delay of 1 turn. A few times I had issues getting confused between the number of the row and the turn number in column 1. This may have caused one empire's to be slightly off. But I did try and get the delay in there.

By Trent Telenko (Ttelenko) On Sunday, December 24, 2006 - 12:59 pm: Edit

>I know. The Hydrans would have 2xPGR and 1xLHN-Q
>at the end of T14. Two ships with 3 EP
>infrastructure cost, and 1 ship with a simple 1
>
>T12 choose Guild PGR (1st Survey)
>T14 choose Guild PGR (2nd Survey) + convert LHN-Q (3rd Survey)

Dale,

IIRC, the Hydran PGR has a Y175 in-service date -- AKA turn 15.

In addition, the AO says that the Hydran LHN-Q cannot go off-map prior to turn 15.

If the Hydrans want additional survey ships prior to Y175, they are going to have to produce a survey-cruiser. The best use of a PGR and LHN-Q hulls is to relieve off-map SR's for use on-map as scout-carriers or for on-map surveys.

Given the costs of survey cruisers and the pressing Hydran needs for the battle fleet. I'd build only one SR-cruiser early and replace it with a PGR. I'd also send the LHN-Q off-map on turn 15 because of the free survey surcharge assocated
with it.