

STARMADA

New Edition of *Starmada* Coming in January

Majestic Twelve Games is thrilled to be able to announce that, after months of planning and testing, the latest version of *Starmada: The Universal Game of Starship Combat* is scheduled for release in January of 2012.

While in some ways this new edition will be notably different from previous incarnations of the game, at its heart *Starmada* remains the game you have grown to know and (hopefully) love. As always, the guiding principle is “simple, but not simplistic.” Among the changes to the game system, players will find:

- A more streamlined movement system;
- Three distinct and layered types of starship defenses;
- A reduction in the number of die rolls — and amount of time — required to resolve ship-to-ship combat. In some cases, the outcome of an attack can be decided by a single throw of the dice!

On the other hand, much remains unchanged, such as:

- A commitment to balanced game play;
- A core set of rules accessible to beginners yet robust enough to support the needs of experienced gamers;
- The most comprehensive set of starship construction rules available in any game currently available!

And of course, *Starmada* will continue to provide dozens of standalone options and advanced rules from which you may pick and choose to fit your desired level of complexity and create the type of game you want to play.

Inevitably, there are going to be some concerns whenever a long-running, popular game undergoes any type of revision. Hopefully, the questions and answers below will help assuage any lingering fears, particularly among those who were introduced to *Starmada* through our partnership with Amarillo Design Bureau. Speaking of which...

What Does This Mean for *Star Fleet Armada*?

Hopefully, this new edition will result in nothing more than a minor speed bump. My plan is to immediately update the existing ships from the first four books (*Klingon Armada*, *Romulan Armada*, *Alien Armada*, and *Distant Armada*) and then move forward as previously planned, probably with *Battleship Armada* in March 2012.

In short, I plan to keep churning out *Star Fleet Universe* books as long as ADB, Inc., will print them.

So, Why Now?

It's hard to give any concrete answer to this question — generally, it seems like the right thing to do, and the right time to do it. Specifically, work on various projects over the past year (some finished, some still in the planning stages) have led me to identify a few areas where key improvements can be made to the *Starmada* engine, and I'm just not very good at sitting still.

In the end, *The Admiralty Edition* has had a great five-year run, during which the game has achieved a new level of popularity, but now it's time for it to step aside for the next iteration. Also, a new edition was inevitable, what with *Starmada's* 20th anniversary coming up in 2013/2014; there was no point in waiting another 18 months or so just for the sake of marking a milestone.

Can You Tell Us More About the Changes?

Many of the “changes” are cosmetic in nature — more concise rules, more functional ship displays, etc. As mentioned above, the movement system has become more streamlined, although that is only on the front end; on the back end (i.e., on the game board) ships will move in the same way as they do now.

Probably the key change is in how weapons fire is resolved. Since at least *Starmada 2.0* (released in 1995) combat has required a sequence of three separate rolls: first, the appropriate number of attack dice are rolled; then hits are re-rolled to confirm damage against the target's shields; and finally a third roll is made to determine the effects of that damage.

With the new edition, this has been condensed to the point where in many cases the results of an attack will be known after the first dice roll. More importantly, weapons are now grouped into “banks” which represent one or more individual weapon mounts that can fire into the same arc(s). Each bank is then assigned a starting number of attack dice. For example, in *The Admiralty Edition*, a ship might have had four weapons in the [AB] firing arc, each with a ROF of 2 and an ACC of 5+. In the new edition, these weapons would be combined into a single forward-firing bank with eight attack dice.

The number of dice rolled in a given attack is then modified based on factors such as range, target defenses, etc. For example, the weapon bank in our above example would roll 11 dice at short range, eight at medium range, and six at long range.

The other major change is in the area of ship defenses. Previously, ships had the option for only one type of defense. Although this could change for narrative purposes — for example, referring to a ship's defenses as “armor” or “ECM” instead of “shields” — within the game, all ships' defenses operated in the same manner. In the new edition, players now have the option of picking from three distinct types of defense (ECM, Armor, and Shields) each of which protects ships in a completely different way.

Elsewhere in this issue, you can view two SFU ships converted to the new edition format. Some of the changes will be obvious; others, you'll just have to wait to understand. However, I am confident that once you've had the chance to see the new rules and play with them a couple times, you'll like what you see. If you want to keep up to date with the plans, or volunteer for some final playtesting, head on over to the Majestic Twelve Games forum: www.mj12games.com/forum.

One Game Inspires Another

Many of the new concepts that went into the new edition of *Starmada* were developed while we were working on the new edition of *Grand Fleets*, MJ12's game of surface battleships. Here is an example card from that new game, showing you the improved graphic style we plan to use. —*Daniel Kast*

WEAPONS	F/A	RANGE	PEN	ATTACK	DICE	-4	-6	-8	-10							
18.1"45	(-1/-3)	9-18-27	6	27	19	14	10	7	5	3	2	2	1	1	1	1
6.1"60 DP	(-2/-2)	6-12-18	2	6	5	3	2	2	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
5"40 DP	(-2/-2)	3-6-9	1	5	4	3	2	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Anti-Air	-4	n/a	n/a	19	13	10	7	5	3	2	2	1	1	1	0	0