

BORDERS OF MADNESS

Now that we have published *Distant Kingdoms* and have brought the concept of fighters into *Federation Commander*, some have asked when we will bring fighters into the game for other empires. There is no guarantee we ever will.

Fighters are not a part of “trek” (although one novel had something like them, a concept not repeated) and it’s arguable if they should ever have been brought into *Star Fleet Battles*. The *Federation & Empire* game would be very different without them, but that is not the point. From a “pure trek” perspective, they should never get into *Federation Commander* and any *Star Fleet Battles* player who wants them can simply graft the rules over without any help from the company.

That said, the *Borders of Madness* project (so named because any attempt to bring all of the *Star Fleet Battles* rules concepts into *Federation Commander* must surely border on madness) is intended to allow *Star Fleet Battles* players to bring their battles into the simpler game engine, and to allow players who never played *Star Fleet Battles* to gain some insight into the general concepts of the larger game universe.

Any attempt to bring a concept from *Star Fleet Battles* into *Federation Commander* must balance the need to accurately reflect the original rule without overloading the new game engine. Let us attempt to do this in three levels, so you can use as much as you can stand.

The two carriers presented in this issue both have the full 12 fighters of *Star Fleet Battles*. Given that we reduced the number of fighters on the Hydran Paladin, if these rules ever migrate across the *Borders of Madness* into *Federation Commander* we might want to reduce these to eight fighters each — or not.

(5QM1) DIRECT-FIRE FIGHTERS

The major problem with bringing fighters into *Federation Commander* is “map clutter”. A squadron of F-18s or Z-Ys with their sheaves of drones would double or triple the number of counters used in a squadron-size or fleet-size scenario. So, one way around this is to use only direct-fire fighters, such as the disruptor-armed Klingon Z-D and the photon-armed Federation A-10. In this issue of *Captain’s Log*, we can try to accomplish this. Ship Cards are provided in this issue for a Federation CVS strike carrier and for a Klingon D7V strike carrier. Each is provided with a choice of fighter squadrons; for this level, the Z-D and A-10 are obviously the ones to use.

(5QM1a) General: Fighters operate as shuttles (with some additional rules noted herein). They have a speed of 16, a turn mode of 1, and take various numbers of damage points to destroy. Fighters can make one High Energy Turn per game turn (at no cost). Fighter shuttle boxes are a different shade of yellow from normal shuttle boxes. Fighters are under the (4A3) restriction which keeps more than three units in one hex from firing at the same target. Fighters are repaired as shuttles (5G6).

(5QM1b) Launching: Fighters launch and land as shuttles. Carriers can launch up to four (two in Fleet Scale) fighters (plus they can launch *or* land one shuttlecraft *or* fighter) on an impulse.

(5QM1c) Limitations: Fighters cannot be used as suicide shuttles or carry cargo or personnel beyond their pilot.

(5QM1d) Damage: Fighters are destroyed after taking the noted number of damage points and are removed from play. Obviously, a destroyed fighter cannot be repaired. Fighters are destroyed (5D5) if towed at a speed over sixteen.

(5QM1e) Crippling: Each type of fighter is crippled after receiving the number of damage points noted on the fighter card. For example, A-10s are “crippled” after receiving 12 of their 16 damage points. When crippled (i.e., at the end of the impulse in

which the crippling damage point is received), a fighter cannot fire or launch any weapons other than a single phaser-3 shot (either offensively or defensively). A crippled fighter can be partially or completely repaired and if (after some repairs) it has less than crippling damage, it is no longer treated as crippled.

(5QM1f) Cost: Each fighter costs the number of points noted; the cost of the ship does not include the cost of the fighters. The owner of a carrier could voluntarily not buy some or all of his allowed fighters; those shuttle boxes are then simply empty.

(5QM2) WEAPONS

(5QM2a) Phaser-3s: A-10s have one phaser-3 (FA) and one phaser-3 (RA). Z-Ds have one phaser-3 (FA). Small yellow rectangles on the fighter diagrams mark the firing of these weapons, which can fire once per turn (each).

(5QM2b) Other weapons: A-10s have one photon and Z-Ds have one disruptor with two charges (and can fire one charge per turn), all with an FA firing arc. These cannot be overloaded. These are reloaded by the carrier at a cost of two energy points for a photon and one energy point for each disruptor charge. The yellow circle(s) on each fighter are marked off when these charges are used. Both are limited to a range of eight hexes, but otherwise use the normal weapon tables.

(5QM2c) Launch: Fighters may not fire their weapons in the first Impulse after launch.

(5QM2d) Arming: Fighters start all scenarios fully armed and loaded (unless the scenario rules state otherwise). A fighter’s weapon may not be recharged in the same turn in which it was fired, so if a fighters fires a weapon and lands, it cannot be recharged until the next turn.

(5QM2e) Limitations: Fighters cannot used Directed Targeting (3D4).

(5QM3) DRONE-ARMED FIGHTERS

We might eventually decide to use only one kind of drone-armed fighter (the Z-Y) for everybody.

(5QM3a) Phaser-3s: F-18s and Z-Ys each have two phaser-3s (FA). F-15s have one gatling phaser (just like the one on a Hydran Stinger) which fires four shots. Small yellow squares on each fighter mark when these are fired; they can fire each turn.

(5QM3b) Drones: F-18s have two drones; F-15s and Z-Ys have four. These are reloaded by the ship whenever on board, costing no energy but requiring four impulses for each drone loaded on the fighter. A carrier can reload any number of drone-armed fighters at the same time, and a fighter can launch with less than a full load of drones. Drones from fighters may not be launched from a range of more than eight hexes from the target. The drones carried by each fighter are symbolized by small yellow triangles on each fighter display. Fighters can launch no more than one drone during any single turn. Each fighter controls its own drones (4F2e); if a fighter is destroyed its drones are removed from play at the end of the Impulse. (Note to *SFB* players: For now, we’re going to ignore dogfighting and dogfight drones.)

(5QM3c) Special Drone Rules: To avoid “map clutter”, players may elect to use these special rules. When a fighter launches a drone, do not track the drone’s movement on the map. Instead, record the hex from which the drone was launched and the identification of the target. If the drone was launched from four or fewer hexes, then during the final sub-pulse of the next impulse, the drone “impacts” the target on the shield facing the original launch hex. If the original range was five-to-eight hexes (or the ship is 5+ hexes from the launch hex at this point), this is done on the final movement subpulse of the second subsequent impulse. After impact, the drones are treated as normal drones *except* other units (allied to the target) may fire normal offensive weapons fire at fighter-launched drones (to reflect those units firing at the drones before they impacted).

Ship Cards provided: Federation CVS, Klingon D7V.