

**(SP0802.0) CONQUEST'S GATE**

(Y114)

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The Klingon Empire was aware that there was 'something' beyond the bounds of Hydran space that they had occupied in Y88. Warp trails were found by Klingon patrols heading out that way, and coming in from out there. While most Hydrans were reticent about speaking of such things, a few were willing to sell rumors about other Hydran colonies in the further region.

Between Y88 and Y114 the Klingon Empire had a number of distractions (like the disastrous war with the Tholians) and could not pay a lot of attention to its more distant frontier. It did not ignore it. Over the 26 intervening years a logistics network was built up in preparation for the dispatch of a fleet to hunt down the wayward Hydran colonies and complete the conquest. The rate of the build up was slow, given all of the other distractions, but the centerpiece, a dock dubbed *Conquest's Gate*, was completed in Y113.

In Y114, Wing Admiral Targol Kumerian gathered his fleet, the main striking force for the anticipated campaign, at the *Gate*, which Fleet Admiral Threlvis Kremler, the overall commander of the DSF in occupied Hydran space, had made his headquarters for the operation. Several other task forces spread over 1,500 parsecs were awaiting the order to commence operations, but the order never came.

Just why the order never came remains a mystery, one of the largest in the Alpha Octant to this day.

All that is known for sure is that the last communications from the *Gate* had placed a 48-hour hold on operations to allow for an approaching ion storm to pass. As expected, the storm disrupted communications, but once it passed nothing was heard from *Conquest's Gate*, or from Admiral Kumerian's fleet. A ship sent to investigate found that the dock, and all of Kumerian's ships, had been destroyed.

*Conquest's Gate* was the key logistics node for the advance, and Kumerian's fleet was the primary striking arm. With their loss, the operation had to be canceled. The Klingon Empire was, understandably, slow in deciding to again attempt the final conquest of Hydran space, and had barely begun gathering the material to do so when the Hydrans launched their own offensive eighteen years later.

What happened at *Conquest's Gate* remains a mystery to this day. It is known that the ion storm could not have been responsible (it passed between *Conquest's Gate* and the other units and bases of the Klingon Empire). There were no survivors among the more than 4,000 personnel that were lost. Not even on the two separated booms that were found. While several log buoys were recovered, all of their data files were blank.

Because there has been no solution, there are a number of theories, most involving monsters, e.g., maybe an early, and unusually large, Starswarm destroyed the dock and fleet. Most of these theories eventually get incorporated (whether officially, or simply because some enterprising cadets are looking for something to amuse themselves) into simulations to try to find the most likely cause.

After the Klingons learned of several time travel incidents involving Federation ships this particular scenario appeared in the DSF Academy's simulators: What if a Hydran X-Cruiser had been thrown back in time and attacked the Dock?

**(SP0802.1) NUMBER OF PLAYERS:** 2; the Klingon player and the Hydran player.

**(SP0802.2) INITIAL SETUP**

**KLINGON:** Early Dock *Conquest's Gate* (2xearly cargo modules) sets up in hex 2215 of Map E, initial facing

and rotation rate at the option of the Klingon player, WS-III.

C4 *Kname1*, D4C *Kname2*, D4 *Kname3*, D4 *Kname4*, D4 *Kname5*, D4 *Kname6*, D4 *Kname7*, F4 *Kname8*, F4 *Kname9*, F4 *Kname10*, and T4 *Kname11* (2xCargo Pods) set up anywhere within ten hexes of *Conquest's Gate*, heading F, speed max, WS-III.

**HYDRAN:** RNX *Adversary* (9xStinger-XM), with two Harrier PFLs, set up anywhere 50 hexes in direction F from the dock, heading C, speed max, WS-III.

**(SP0802.3) LENGTH OF SCENARIO:** The scenario continues until all forces belonging to one side have been destroyed, captured, disengaged, or until the end of Turn #20.

**(SP0802.4) SPECIAL RULES**

**(SP0802.41) MAP:** The map is fixed; it does not float. Any unit leaving the map has disengaged and cannot return. The map consists of nine mapsheets laid out in large rectangle. Map A is the upper left map with its 42xx edge abutting the 01xx edge of Map B, and its xx30 edge abutting the xx01 edge of Map D. Map E is the center map, so maps A, B, and C are the top three, D, E, and F are the middle three, and G, H, and I are the bottom three. The Klingon units can only disengage by distance (not acceleration) in directions A, B, or C. The Hydran units cannot disengage by any means (if they leave the map they are destroyed). Units that disengage in unauthorized directions are considered destroyed.

**(SP0802.42) SHUTTLES AND PFs:** All Hydran shuttles (not fighters) and PFs have warp booster packs, all Hydran fighters have mega-packs. All Hydran shuttles are advanced types. All Klingon shuttles do not have warp packs and are Admin-Ys.

**(SP0802.421)** If using the optional MRS shuttles, the Hydran RNX has one MRS-X, this unit counts against the Commander's Option points available to the ship in (SP0802.431) below.

**(SP0802.422)** There are no electronic warfare fighters in the basic version of this scenario (there are no Stinger-XEW fighters). In a variant in which electronic warfare fighters can be used, use the standard deployment patterns (one EWF for each squadron of eight or more fighters) for EW fighters.

**(SP0802.423)** The two PFs carried by the Hydran RNX are Leader variants of the Harrier PF.

**(SP0802.43) COMMANDER'S OPTION ITEMS**

**(SP0802.431)** Each ship can purchase additional or special equipment as Commander's Option Items (e.g., T-bombs, extra Marines, etc.) up to 20% of its Combat BPV. See (S3.2) for details and exceptions.

**(SP0802.432)** All drones are "slow," i.e., speed-8. Type-II and type-V drones (speed 12) are available for purchase as special drones.

Each drone-armed ship can purchase special drones up to the historical percentages appropriate to that empire as part of the Commander's Option Items. Note that (S3.2) allows drone ships extra points for this purpose.

**(SP0802.433)** The RNX has a Prime Team.

**(SP0802.44) REFITS:** The RNX has the mech link refit. There are no other refits in this scenario.

**(SP0802.45) KLINGON DISENGAGEMENT:** No Klingon ship or other unit can attempt to disengage unless the Dock has been destroyed. The Dock cannot self-destruct unless all of its weapons and/or power systems have been destroyed and it has no capability to repair them during the part of the scenario remaining. This restriction is no longer in force at the end of Turn #15. By Turn #15 the Klingons will have realized

that their paramount concern is to spread warning of this strange and powerful ship and that at least one ship must escape to spread the word.

**(SP0802.46) KLINGON MANEUVER RESTRICTIONS:** No Klingon ship can move, under its own volition, more than thirty hexes from the dock until after Turn #15 unless a Hydran unit is in its FA arc and it is moving forward. (Or a Hydran unit is in its RA arc and it is moving in reverse.) If no Hydran units are within fifteen hexes of a Klingon ship that is thirty hexes from the dock, it must move back to within thirty hexes of the dock as quickly as possible. Any Klingon ship that violates this rule is destroyed. This reflects that the primary goal of the Klingons, at least initially, is to protect the dock.

**(SP0802.47) HYDRAN RESTRICTIONS:** If the dock is not destroyed by the end of Turn #15, the Hydrans lose. This reflects that the Hydrans themselves do not know how they got back there and what may happen, but would recognize that if the dock survived their incursion the Klingons might still invade the Old Colonies. Not destroying it prior to Turn #15 simply reflects the Hydran captain realizing that the dock would keep the Klingons from dispersing as long as they thought they were defending it from him.

**(SP0802.48) SUBLIGHT DISENGAGEMENT:** Klingon units cannot disengage by sublight as the advanced sensors of the Hydran RNX are able to detect the emissions of the less advanced impulse engines used by the Klingons in this period. The Klingons would not be aware that the Hydrans could track the emissions of their impulse engines.

**(SP0802.5) VICTORY CONDITIONS:** The Klingons win by one of three means:

The Dock is not destroyed before the Energy Allocation Phase of Turn #16.

If any Klingon ship successfully disengages by distance in directions A, B, or C after the end of Turn #16 but before the end of Turn #20.

They succeed in capturing this powerful mystery ship.

The Hydrans can only win the scenario if every Klingon ship, to include the base, is destroyed by the end of Turn #20. Klingon shuttles do not count as ships for this purpose, but separated booms do.

**(SP0802.6) VARIATIONS:** The scenario can be played again under different conditions by making one or more of the following changes:

**(SP0802.61)** Replace the Klingons with a Lyran force consisting of a YDN, 6xYCA, 3xYFF, 1xYTG (2xcargo pallets), and a Dock (2xearly cargo modules).

**(SP0802.62)** Assume a Starswarm (SM12.0) attacked *Conquest's Gate*. Use a force of 78 Starswarm robots. The Starswarm player (or players, it is a good idea to have more than one player controlling the Starswarm, at least three are recommended) deploys the Starswarm in any manner he sees fit at least 50 hexes from the Dock. The goal of the Starswarm is the same as the Hydran goal, to destroy the entire Klingon force. The Klingons are still under the restrictions of (SP0802.45), (SP0802.46), and (SP0802.48).

**(SP0802.63)** For a smaller battle replace the RNX with an LNX (4xStinger-XM, 1xHarrier PFL). Replace the Klingon Dock with a YBS (2xearly cargo modules), and use only the C4, 3xD4 and 3xF4.

**(SP0802.64)** Another time travel possibility considered was Andromedans. Replace the RNX and its units with an Andromedan Intruder, with the Andromedan player's choice of satellite ships subject to the limits of its hangar bay.

**(SP0802.65)** Replace the RNX (9xStinger-XM) and its two Harrier PFLs with a DGX (3xStinger-XM) carrying two Hellion PFLs, or with an LBX (3xStinger-XM) carrying a Hellion PFL and a Harrier PFL.

**(SP0802.7) BALANCE:** The scenario can be balanced between players of different skill levels by one or more of the following:

**(SP0802.71)** Change some, up to all, of the Stinger-XMs to Stinger-2Ms, or standard Stinger-2s.

**(SP0802.72)** Replace one, some, or all of the F4s with D4s to favor the Klingons, or one, some, or all of the D4s with F4s to favor the Hydran.

**(SP0802.73)** Delete one or both of the Hydran PFLs, or downgrade one or both of the PFLs to standard Harrier PFs.

**(SP0802.74)** Replace one or both of the Hydran Harrier PFLs with Hellion PFLs, or Hellion PFs.

### **(SP0802.8) TACTICS**

**HYDRAN:** Be careful with your time and firepower. Wrecking the dock early is a nice thing, but be careful not to leave it in condition to self-destruct. You want the surviving Klingons to scatter as late as possible so that you can chew them up and leave them too crippled to run. But remember that you have to kill the base before the end of Turn #15. Keep your Marines loose and make sure you have all the extras you can get, you will have down shields at some point in this fight, and you can expect the Klingons to swarm aboard as fast as they can. While their transporters are short ranged, you are probably going to have to be very close to their ships to maximize your damage output in the limited time you have available to destroy them all.

**KLINGON:** This is a nightmare scenario worse than the Gorns faced when that Federation cruiser visited them in the past. Sure, the fusion beams are still short-ranged (albeit not a weapon you had encountered previously as the Hydrans have not deployed them yet), but they fire every turn. Even with the Dock backing you, he has an edge in electronic warfare. Could you imagine playing this scenario if all you had ever played was "early years" and had never seen a fighter, much less Stinger-XMs? Your only chance is to mass your fire to get through his shields and the reinforcement energy he has available, but even to do that may require eliminating his supporting units (fighters, PFLs) first. Expect him to move off to recharge his batteries and make shield repairs at least a couple of times, but not often. He has a severe clock running on him that will force him to stay close and keep pounding you. Launch drones, not with the idea of actually getting hits mind you, but to put something between you and him that he will have to maneuver around (or expend firepower and shield boxes to get through). Keep suicide shuttles armed to make the overruns harder. If you have the opportunity, stuff all the Marines you can through a down shield on the enemy ship (the short-range of your transporters will require you to be really close to accomplish this). Think of the glory of a successful capture of such a ship!

### **(SP0802.9) PLAYTESTERS COMMENTS:**

**(SP0802.X) DESIGNER'S NOTES:** Essentially a chance to test the differences in technology between Y era ships and a fully tricked out X-cruiser.

**HISTORICAL OUTCOME:** This simulation was entered into the computers of the Klingon DSF Academy in Y215 after it was learned that a Hydran RNX had suffered a mysterious disaster in the same area in Y210. The RNX *Bravery* (referred to as the *Adversary* in the simulation) was crossing the region in response to a distress call, and took a short cut through an ion storm that was expected to temporarily cut it off from communications. It never arrived (its failure to arrive had its own catastrophic consequences that are irrelevant to the simulation) and nothing further was heard from it.

A month later, a Hydran police ship found the *Bravery* floating dead in space. The ship had sustained damage, and almost every member of its more than 500 person crew was found aboard, dead. Most of them had died at their combat posts, for completely undetermined reasons (they were simply dead); others were clearly being treated for wounds and injuries in the ship's medical facilities when . . . whatever happened occurred. The ship's fighters were missing, as were most of its shuttles and much of the fighter stores (pods, chaff packs, repair parts, etc.). Both PFLs and their crews were also missing. There were also clear signs that combat had taken place aboard the ship (damage caused by small arms). The crews of the PFs and the pilots of the missing fighters and shuttles accounted for most, although not all, of the missing members of the ship's personnel complement.

And not one record of what had happened was found. All of the ship's records had been mysteriously wiped (even the heavily shielded log buoys, which were normally continuously and automatically updated while the ship was in combat, were blank, and none had been launched).

Whether the fate that befell the *Bravery* was somehow related to what happened at *Conquest's Gate* is unknown. Whatever happened at *Conquest's Gate* doubtless changed history, as a successful Klingon offensive into the Hydran Old Colonies in Y114 would have prevented the Hydran liberation of their Kingdom, and permitted the Klingons and Lyrans to better concentrate on the Kzintis. And perhaps, with an assured avenue of expansion for the Klingon Empire the General War would have been avoided (or might have resulted in increased antagonism and conflict between the Klingons and the Lyrans). Which in turn might have left the Alpha Octant ripe for Andromedan domination.