NEW RULE: TERRAIN

One major new rule being considered for SFBF-2 is the use of “terrain” cards. These would be action cards and would be played during your turn, taking the place of a formation change. The card would remain in front of your fleet until your next turn, when it would be discarded at the time of your formation change. No, you cannot use a second formation change to stay inside the terrain.

Asteroids: Anyone shooting at you, and anyone you shoot at, has a penalty of two ECM points (which basically reduces the value of all attack cards by two points). Tholian ships cannot be attacked at all when covered by an asteroid card, but can attack at the prescribed penalty.

Dust Clouds: Same as Asteroids, but only one point of ECM and no special benefit for the Tholians.

NEW SHIPS

We released cards for the Federation Kirov-class and Klingon C7-class heavy battlecruisers. These are “not real cards” but simple cardstock, but they do have the actual art. We have been giving these away for free in mail orders for months. You can send a stamped-self-addressed envelope or two IRCs for them if you want them but don’t buy our products by mail order.

It has been suggested that we provide a number of “carrier escort” cards, and that you cannot attack a carrier unless all escorts have been eliminated.

Another obviously-missing class of ships is the venerable scout. This ship, having fewer weapons than its half-sisters, would provide ECM and ECCM to other ships (at least, as long as it stays alive in combat).

Other classes such as minesweepers and PF tenders might be better handled by special action cards.

NEW CARDS

Several new cards have been suggested, and sound like they could be useful additions to the game.

Supply Raid: Play this as a regular attack on an opponent. You can then look at all of his reserve cards and take one of them into your hand, or force him to discard two of them.—Vince Weibert

Economic Exhaustion: Play this card in place of an attack. Everyone has to discard all of their Reserve Cards (face up, for all to see what they were). Reshuffle the deck.—Matthew Curry

Andromedan Intruder: Somewhat like the Space Dragon card, this “ship” is played in the center of the table, and everyone must fire one weapons card at it. (If you do not have a weapons card, you must expose your entire hand to prove this. You can use a weapons card from the Reserve.) If the Andromedan is not destroyed (by a number damage points equal to four times the number of players) as a result of these attacks, it destroys the weakest ship from all players.—Anthony Trevellian

T-Bomb: This card destroys one incoming drone card; if that card was doubled by a scatter-pack then both the drone card and the scatter-pack card are removed. Alternatively, playing this card as part of an attack exposes one cloaked ship. If under attack by fighters, play this card and roll one die; the number on the die is the number of fighters destroyed.—Vince Weibert

Black Hole: Play this card in place of a regular attack, and all enemy ships in the main body are pulled forward into the screen.—David Kass

Tractor Beam: On defense, this removes any one drone card. As part of an attack, this doubles the effect of any one drone or plasma card (unless blocked by an enemy tractor card); a given card cannot be doubled more than one time in a given attack.

DESIGN CONCEPTS

We definitely want the two decks to be combinable, but we also want each deck to work on its own. (Some want SFBF2 to require SFBF1, which would simplify some design concepts.) It is fairly obvious to add the Hydrans, ISC, and Lyrans, but the problem is that their unusual weapons would be “too rare” in the deck. One option would be to make the ESG a weapon that didn’t require a card, the PPD a function of a plasma-F card, and to (see CL#25) use other cards for the Hydran weapons.

Several players have suggested specific cards, or a new category of cards, which have to be played immediately when drawn. The problem is that there is no way to enforce this rule, and somebody who drew such a card might (by cheating) simply keep it in his hand until he finds a better use for it, then by a little card shuffling it becomes the card that he just drew. It would be possible to mark the back of such cards, but you would know when it was on top of the draw pile that it was up next and might decide to draw from your reserve rather than taking that card. Absent a good solution for these problems, we’ll just keep this idea on file.

ON-LINE GAMING

We are currently negotiating a deal that (if it happens) would bring Star Fleet Battle Force to the realm of on-line gaming. This particular web site charges 25¢ to play a game against several live opponents. If this deal works and the game site proves popular, we may provide the site with many new cards that it is not practical to actually print. Those “must play” cards that don’t work in a real deck could be handled by the computer, which would keep everyone honest about them. If this deal materializes, we will have announcements on the web site and a link to the site.