

# Hailing Frequencies

Fanzine for the SFC/SFC2 Online Community

<http://hailingfrequencies.tripod.com>

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## Open Hail

It's hard to believe that a year has passed since SFC was first put into the hands of gamers. On the 26th it will be one year since the demo of StarFleet Command was made available to the general public.

The response to Hailing Frequencies has been incredible. It is funny to look back at the beginning of this fanzine. I had been trying for a few months to drum up interest in such a project but without any success. Meanwhile Dennis Greene had been considering such a project but did not have the time to really put it together. When Dennis approached me I was leery to say the least. I've had previous experience with fanzines and know that without fan support they quickly fold. However we both love SFC and so the interest in the game and Dennis' fast talking got us started. Our goal that first issue was to get 300 hits and see if people would be interested. WOW, I was not ready for the level of response we saw, though Dennis never had a doubt. The SFC Community has been outstanding in it's support of our efforts. Without a doubt SFC players are best fans on the net.

We return to the halls of Taldren and again track down Joshua "Jinx" Morris.

After some minor badgering we have gotten him to spill some of beans on the upcoming SFC2, specifically this issue we take a look at Fighters in the upcoming game.

Nicholas A Cioran returns this issue and brings back the Tactical Tidbits column, this month we look at Team Tactics. With the current craze for campaign play in SFC, team tactics alone are not enough, you must also learn how to use a mixed fleet effectively. E.L. Crisler takes this task to hand and shows you Fleet Tactics: Federation.

In our regular section of thesis material Dennis Greene will step forward, this time in a two part series to look at the weapon systems in SFC and how to best employ them. Part I - Phaser Breakdown, is a great piece that provides information for beginners and advanced players alike. But what good are weapons if you don't have the power to arm them? Dennis goes a step further and has written an article that explores the Energy Priority system used in SFC.

Rounding out our tactical section this issue we continue with our Feature Ship column, Chris Rebman steps forward to show us how to get the most out of the Hydran Ranger.

This is a lot of tactical material, but all work and no play makes SFC a dull game. So do not despair we have some great fiction for you. An excellent Orion piece is on the plate this issue.

WOW, fiction and tactical material, you would think this would be enough, not for us! James King has been seen on the message boards of late posting notes on how to improve your game system performance for SFC, the material is so helpful I thought it deserved more recognition. He has polished up his material and presents us with an article on System Refinement.

With all this serious material we at Hailing Frequencies felt that a bit of humor might be fun. Evidently so did J. Jeffery, The Drink of a New Galaxy is a blast to read.

Of course Hailing Frequencies would not be complete without our Campaign Reporting section. SFCC and SFCC PBEM have returned with updated reports.

All in all this is a very full issue with material that everyone should enjoy. So enough with this preview crap, on to the real thing.

Hailing Frequencies Open

## SFC II Interview: Fighters

Interview with Joshua "Jinx" Morris

Once again we have tortured Josh Morris and gotten him to divulge more secrets about SFC2. This time around we decided to concentrate on fighters and see how they will be implemented in SFC2. The answers to our questions just made us curious for more.

**HF:** We already know that there will be fighters this time around and that some races will have PFs instead of fighters. Can you give us the breakdown as to what races has what?

**Joshua Morris:** Gorn, Romulan, and of course Lyran will have fast patrol ships. Everyone else will have fighters.

**HF:** In SFB the fighter situation quickly became confusing with so many different models to choose

from for each race. In SFC2 the Hydrans are equipped with 4 different classes of fighters. Can we get a rough idea of how fighters will breakdown for the other races?

**Joshua Morris:** The plan is to port all the fighter types from SFB currently. Players of course can import their own additional fighter models if they choose.

**HF:** Since fighters were a late addition for most races, other than the Mirak and Hydrans, what era will fighters make their appearance in with SFC2? (This question is assuming an era system similar to SFC)

**Joshua Morris:** The appearance will be based on the year they were introduced in SFB. The eras themselves might be adjusted a little. Eras are not really as relevant in SFC2

since the ships will come into play the year in which they are supposed to in SFB. This makes the eras much more gradient.

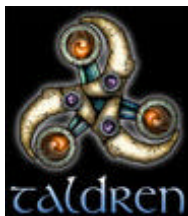
**HF:** Fighters in SFC1 were a bit unbalanced, or at least considered to be by many, due to the fact that they did not need to reload, will reloads be a part of SFC2?

**Joshua Morris:** Yes, Fighters will reload.

**HF:** Another common complaint was that fighters were too fast in SFC1, will fighters have a slower speed in SFC2?

**Joshua Morris:** Fighter speeds are still a play balance issue. We prefer faster fighters. This will be tested in the Beta.

**HF:** Another big complaint with  
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# Weapon System Breakdown: Phasers

By Dennis Greene

## Introduction

The weapon systems in Starfleet Command (SFC) are probably one of the most misunderstood and abused systems in the game. Most new players just "move and fire" with no thought for getting the most bang for their buck. Most discover that the closer you are the more "dangerous" you are, failing to realize that so is your opponent. The veteran non-SFB player goes by the "average" damage and has a feel for what his weapons can do, but it's "magic" to them on a certain level. Then there is the former SFB player who either looks up the old tables or fuzzily remembers what they were and bases their actions on those memories or "references".

## Purpose

The purpose of this series is to give you, the players, a comprehensive guideline on exactly what the weapons can do in SFC. It is hoped that with greater understanding and a reliable reference source, your gaming experience in SFC will be richer and allow for you to gain greater tactical insight as to why some tactics work and others get you killed. How the relation and power of your weapons interrelate with your other systems like Electronic warfare, Erratic Maneuvers, High Energy Turns, Power management and practically everything related to playing SFC and winning! Part one will be on phasers and Part two will be about all the heavy weapons. Each portion of the series will have a weapons breakdown and then some suggestions on some specific tactics and methods you can use to be more effective. Lastly, each article will end with some practice drills for you to use to refine and teach you the skills you'll need as an Elite Captain! I can't promise to give you victory, but I can promise to improve your game!

## Part I - Phasers

We'll begin with the most common and most potent weapon available to any race in SFC, the starship phasers. Below are the specific phasers by type used in SFC. I have included phaser type-4's because many players are also using custom designed API scripts that enable them to manipulate

bases, these are here only for reference and completeness. I will be concentrating on starship weapons though for the purposes of this article.

As can be seen here the phaser type-1 is the most potent starship phaser available to you in SFC. It is the offensive phaser. Costing a single unit of power to arm, it is the most effective phaser type, giving you the most "Bang" for the power invested into it. Examining this table we can see that the Ph-1 does respectable damage out to range 8k. Although it has a range of 75k, you have at best only a 16% chance of inflicting a single point of damage. Out to range 5k, assuming no EW shift, a phaser 1 never misses. Once we cross the 6-8k range, our chances of hitting are 83% and at 9-15k

this drops suddenly to only 50%. The smart Captain, typically won't fire his Ph-1 beyond range 8k, unless he is presented a downed shield. Firing at range 9 to 15 is a gamble, with a 50/50 chance of causing damage, the odds worsening beyond that range.

The phaser type-2 is the second best starship phaser in SFC. It is an offensive/defensive phaser. This distinction is important if you want to get the most use out of what this phaser can do. As can be seen it does respectable offensive damage out to range 3k and moderate damage to

range 8k. It's maximum range is shorter than the Ph-1, firing only as far as 50k, with little chance to hit. Like the Ph-1, it has a 50/50 chance to hit out to range 15k, with less damage delivered. An important difference is that the Ph-2 is also a defensive phaser. Although any phaser can be used defensively vs drones, shuttles, fighters and plasma torpedo's, the Ph-2 is "optimized" for this type of duty. It costs only a single unit of power to arm, like its more powerful cousin, but the Ph-2 is a better choice for defense due to the power to damage ratio. A Ph-2 can kill most type 1 drones 83% of the time, where a Ph-1 destroys that drone and has left over damage potential that is left unused. This is the most "general" purpose phaser in the game. Effective in offense as well as defense. As with the Ph-1, offensively the smart captain won't fire his Ph-2 beyond range 8k, but if you want to

Phaser, Type-1 (Ph-1)													
Range	0	1	2	3	4	5	6-8	9-15	16-25	26-50	51-75		
16%	9	8	7	6	5	5	4	3	2	1	1		
33%	8	7	6	5	5	4	3	2	1	1	0		
50%	7	5	5	4	4	4	3	1	0	0	0		
67%	6	4	4	4	4	3	2	0	0	0	0		
83%	5	4	4	4	3	3	1	0	0	0	0		
100%	4	4	3	3	2	2	0	0	0	0	0		
Avg.	6.5	5.3	4.8	4.3	3.8	3.5	2.2	1	.5	.3	.2		

how much ECM (Electronic Counter Measures) your opponent is using against you that you have not countered with ECCM (Electronic Counter-Counter Measures). You will typically see a 0, 1 or 2 and rarely 3. What this means is that it reduces your chances to hit. For Example:

Phaser, Type-2 (Ph-2)									
Range	0	1	2	3	4-8	9-15	16-30	31-50	
16%	6	5	5	4	3	2	1	1	
33%	6	5	4	4	2	1	1	0	
50%	6	4	4	4	1	1	0	0	
67%	5	4	4	3	1	0	0	0	
83%	5	4	3	3	0	0	0	0	
100%	5	3	3	3	0	0	0	0	
Avg.	5.5	4.2	3.8	3.5	1.2	.7	.3	.2	

Lets look at the 4-8K range for the Ph-2. As can be seen we have an overall 67% chance to hit for a single point of damage, and a 16% chance of delivering 3 points of damage. A 1 EW shift "shifts" our chance by 1 on the row in the above table. In this example, our overall chance to hit is now 50%, and

if they had a 2 EW, our chances would be a 33%.

What happens you say if the range is 3k and you do the least damage (ie you got that 100% chance to do only 3 points of damage)? The EW shift actually moves the range column over by that number. If you were unfortunate enough to do the "minimum" damage, a 1 EW shift would be as if you fired at range 4-8k instead of 3k and a 2 EW shift would be as if you fired at

range 9-15k. So pay attention to EW, it has a profound effect on your ability to cause damage to your opponent!

Phaser, Type-3 (Ph-3) / Type-G (Ph-G)						
Range	0	1	2	3	4-8	9-15
16%	4	4	4	3	1	1
33%	4	4	4	2	1	0
50%	4	4	4	1	0	0
67%	4	4	3	0	0	0
83%	4	3	2	0	0	0
100%	3	3	1	0	0	0
Avg.	3.8	3.7	3	1	.3	.2

Next is the phaser type 3. This is purely a defensive weapon. Although in a pinch it can be used offensively, it's meant for defense. This phaser, unlike its more powerful

cousins, costs only half a power point to arm. So you can arm 2 Ph-3's for the same cost as arming a single Ph-1 or Ph-2. It's range is severely limited, having only a maximum range of 15k. Offensively it can do moderate damage out to range 2 and can cause some damage out to range 3, 50% of the time. Beyond that range, it is typically a waste of power. There is a special kind of Ph-3 available called the Gatlin Phaser or Type-G. This phaser costs 1 power to arm and fires as 4 Ph-3's. It is extremely effective at defense and at close ranges, very dangerous offensively.

Type 4 phasers is the most dangerous and fright-

Phaser, Type-4 (Ph-4)													
Range	0-3	4-5	6	7	8	9	10	11-13	14-17	18-25	26-40	41-70	71-100
16%	20	20	20	15	12	10	8	6	5	4	3	2	1
33%	20	20	15	12	11	9	8	6	4	3	2	1	0
50%	20	15	12	11	10	8	7	5	4	2	1	0	0
67%	20	15	11	10	9	8	6	4	3	1	0	0	0
83%	15	12	10	9	8	7	5	3	2	0	0	0	0
100%	15	10	9	8	7	6	5	3	1	0	0	0	0
Avg.	18.3	15.3	12.8	9.5	8.2	6.5	5.5	4.5	3.2	2.2	1	.5	.2

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# Featured Ship: Hydran Ranger

Chris Rebman, E.L. Crisler & Dennis Greene

Among the Hydran Royal Navy, is a ship known as the Ranger. It is a standard class when compared to others in the fleet, carrying only the Fusion beams that the Hydrans are most famous for. However, when employed properly, the Ranger can be a devastating fighter. In addition to the fusion beams, the Ranger carries nine fighters, the most carried by a Hydrant vessel of its size class. As such, the fighters carry a lot of weight in the ranger's tactics. Overview of the Ranger

First, we should look at the ranger in terms of what it carries. As already mentioned it carries four fusion beams and nine fighters. However, we should look at other items as well. It can only carry two suicide shuttles, and two Decoy shuttles. The suicide shuttles for a Hydran are usually a poor use of BPV points. Fighters can provide more firepower and are capable of defending themselves. In addition fighters are capable of better speed than an SS and as such are more usable in fleet maneuvers. The decoy shuttles are not really needed with any Hydran ship but with the Ranger they are especially useless. Between the Gatling Phasers of the Ranger and the point defense provided by the fighter cover, the ranger is practically drone proof.

The Gatling Phasers, when used with the Fusion beams, make the Ranger the ugliest knife fighter in the game. While not very effective at longer ranges the Gatlings are deadly at close range. At range 2, one Gatling Phaser is capable of delivering an average of 12 points of damage!

Forward Phasers on the Ranger unfortunately are less than spectacular, being only phaser type 2's. This provides less ranged firepower than the Type 1 Phasers and does not have the close range damage of the Gatlings. However, this disadvantage is not as severe as it would first seem. For the forward Phasers to be effective the Ranger needs to make a close range battle pass, and this is where the Ranger excels!.The ability of the Ranger to launch four groups of fighters or shuttles before the shuttle bay needs to recycle, is also one of its strengths. This allows the entire flight of fighters to be launched if need be, almost at the same time.

The power curve of the Ranger isn't too bad, unless you are trying to overload your fusions. Accelerating in stages as your guns charge or only charging one fusion at a time can extend this.

### The Fusion Beam

In order to better understand the limitations of the Fusion cannon as a main weapon, you must know a bit about the damage of the Fusion. The Fusion is most effective at close range, usually 3 or less. At longer ranges the effectiveness of the weapon falls off sharply.

The fusion can be loaded to three levels, Standard, Overload,

Fusion: Standard Load							
Range	0	1	2	3-10	11-15	16-24	
Min Damage	8	4	2	0	0	0	
Max Damage	13	8	6	4	3	2	
Avg. Damage	9.8	6.3	3.8	1.8	1.2	.2	

and Suicide overload. Lets look at each mode.

As you can see, in Standard Mode the Fusion does okay at closer ranges but the average damage falls off sharply at range 3 to 10. This has led to many people assuming that the Fusion is useless at longer ranges. This is a fallacy that the Ranger Captain can exploit.

With a full fighter load the Ranger can field 13 Fusion beams. This means that even at range 15, consider long range for a fusion by most, the Ranger and it's fighters can generate an average of 14.6 damage. This is a very respectable amount of damage, in fact a D7 , using it's heavy weapons can only generate an average of 9 points of damage. Not a bad comparison for a short range only weapon .

Fusion: Overload				
Range	0	1	2	3-8
Min Damage	12	6	3	0
Max Damage	19	12	9	6
Avg. Damage	14.5	9.3	5.5	2.5

Overloads are considered that standard arming mode for fusions by many players. Once you look at these numbers it

is easy to see why. However the overload on a Fusion, just like with any other weapon, is an energy hog. Be sure you want the overloads before you arm them.

Of interesting note here is the sharp drop off point of the damage. Overloads are most effective at range 1 or 2. Beyond this range they are useful but the sharp drop off in damage potential is again seen.

This by far is the most potent firing mode, if damage potential is all you are after. While this mode looks attractive it can also spell suicide for the ship, hence the name. Actually the name is derived from the fact that when a fusion beam is fired in this mode it is destroyed. As such, this is a last ditch tactic and is usually a sign of desperation. If you have to use Suicide Fusion, it is usually better to runaway. UNLESS you are sure that the suicide load will kill the enemy.

### Choosing Fighters

A lot of this section really depends on the era you choose to fight in. In the early era the Ranger is limited to the patrol fighters. This means that full Fusion tactics come into use. When using this fighter a good tactic is to use the Ranger as an escort to the fighters. This might seem backwards but it works well. The

Fighter AI tends to fire Fusions at longer ranges. By keeping the fighters close you provide the firepower to cover them if the enemy closes. While they can slowly pick an enemy apart at range.

In the middle era the Interceptor becomes available and now you have some choices to make. The Interceptor is a much better

choice than the Patrol fighter. While it maintains the same heavy weapon lad as the patrol fighter, it enhances this with the Gatlin Phaser. This provides much better escort ability for the fighter as well as give it a lot more close in punch. Once these become available ditch the patrol fighters.

In the late era the Heavy fighter and assault squadron become available as well. The heavy fighter replaces the fusion with the Hellbore. This provides a POTENT mix with the Ranger. The Assault Squadron gives you a mix of Interceptors and Heavy Fighters. At this point the fighter choices become less clear and really become a matter to fighting style preference. I personally prefer to get 2 squadrons on Heavy fighters and a single squadron of patrol fighters. This provides good escort ability and excellent long range support.

### Choosing the Rangers Role

Before the fight begins it is important to decide HOW you want to use your Ranger. While the Ranger has been considered limited, due to it's weapon load out, in truth it is one of the most versatile warships in the game. Lets look at a few possible roles.

#### Ranger as Cruiser

This is the role most people use the Ranger in. To be effective you have to learn how to use the fighters. Launch the fighters only when you are forced to. This can be due to a massive missile launch. The fighters will then provide good point defense. Or launch them as you are about to make a close pass to the enemy. This will allow them to capitalize on the shield damage you will inflict.

When using the Ranger in this role it is important to close on the enemy and stay there. The Ranger can absorb a lot of damage before losing the ability to fight well. Use this your advantage. Get close and knife fight the enemy to death. Gatlins and Fusions are an ugly combination at close range. If need be tractor the enemy to keep him close.

In this role the Interceptor is the best choice of fighter since it can greatly enhance your close fighting ability. This role is most commonly seen in early and middle era.

#### Ranger as Carrier

This is a slightly different role and requires a different approach. Use the ranger at ranges of 10 -15. Launch the fighters early and have them stay close. the combined fusion power of the fighters and the Ranger will quickly knock down a shield on almost any opponent. Then if he chooses to close you have him dead :-). The key here to stay back out of the fight until the last minute. Use your fusion in concert with the fighters, but the goal here is to support the fighters mid range fusion strikes.

#### The Ranger as an Escort

This is perhaps the most overlooked option of the Ranger. The goal here is to provide a deterrent from the enemy closing to attack. Keep your fusions in overload mode and arm up with Heavy Fighters. Allow the fighters to shoot and

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## Fleet Tactics: *Federation*

E.L. Crisler

Admiral Crisler walked toward the podium. The room was filled and the class was slightly noisier than most. This class always brought out the students that thought they knew it all. Oh these were bright students, each more than capable in command of the use of a single ship. But the purpose of this class was to expand that knowledge to the proper use of fleet tactics.

"Alright ladies and gentlemen, it is time for us to begin. Please quiet down and take your seats." The usual grumbling began to murmur through the class, Admiral Crisler just smiled.

"Today ladies and gentlemen we will be discussing the proper use of Federation vessels in a mixed fleet environment. Lets begin with some simple material. Can anyone explain to me the advantage of the Photon Torpedo in fleet tactics?"

Of course 20 hands all shot up at once and the Admiral slowly surveyed the room. It was best to find the biggest know-it-all early and nail him, then the class would be more receptive to what he had to say. A female in the second row caught his eye, she was not bad looking, but the smug appearance was what he was looking for. Referring to the seating chart..."Ensign Mitchell, can you answer this question for us?" The Ensign lazily stood, "The advantage of the photon in a fleet engagement is obvious. The fleet allows the massing of the photons against a single target. This increases the odds of a hit and cause more damage to the selected target. At long range all ships will use proximity loads and at close range the ships will all arm overloads."

"Interesting response Ensign." She began to sit down. "However ensign I have a question on your answer. What would happen if the enemy realized this tactic and chose to lose one ship? Then while the fleet rearms they close and hit the fleet while the photons are rearming?"

Again she stood, this time a bit quicker but still with the smug look. "Well sir if they closed then the fleets combine phaser fire would gut them." She did not look so sure this time, good this might go easier than the last class. Again she began to sit..."HMMM, Ensign this would work, provided the enemy was not using seeking weapons. Against a mass seeking weapon launch would not many of the phasers be needed for point defense?"

The female Ensign now looked much less sure and a bit confused; at last the Admiral felt he could get started.

"Now then what you have sited are good basic tactics for team play. But fleet actions are a totally different animal. Lets begin with defining ship roles.

In a fleet action there are basically two ship types, the Capital Ship, which is usually the heavier vessel and holds the primary firepower. This is determined by the goals of the fleet maneuver. The capital ship is usually the command vessel in a fleet action. We also have the escort vessel. The job of the escort vessel is to make sure the capital ship gets the chance to perform the job it is there for.

In most cases the role each ship in a fleet will play is fairly obvious, however there are times

when the roles will not be as they seem. The key is to learn how to effectively apply these roles and when they apply. Lets begin with a basic example, a Frigate Squadron."

Admiral Crisler looked around the class, each student was preparing to take notes, at last he had their attention. "In this imaginary Frigate Squadron we will take a FFD and two FFGs. Next we will assume that this squadron is in basic patrol maneuvers. Therefore its goal is to scout out and engage an enemy vessel or group of vessels, until reinforcements can arrive. Now at first glance many would assume the FFD to be the command vessel. However in its role as a support vessel, the FFD is not a good choice. While it has substantial firepower, that firepower cannot be brought to bear easily, as its missiles are a not an effect direct fire long ranged weapon, but more useful in herding, supporting role, to maneuver and soak up weapons fire from the enemy. Nor can it really be supported by the FFGs to help with this goal. In this instance we shall give command to one of the FFGs.

In fleet or ship engagements the goal is to hurt the enemy without him hurting you. To this end we will use the FFD and FFG that remains to provide support. If we assume traditional enemies this support is fairly easy to provide.

The command FFG will engage the enemy at medium range using proximity photon torpedoes. The FFD will use its drones to coral the enemy, and perhaps draw of some weapons fire. All three ships will hold back phasers to provide point defense as needed. Now here is where the trick comes in.

While the main FFG is reloading its photons what is the second FFG doing?" Crisler smiled as an eager cadet in the back jumped to his feet, "Sir, the second FFG would be holding proximity photons as well and would fire them when the first ship was almost completed with its arming cycle!"

"Not bad Ensign Calhoun. However the answer has a problem. What would happen if the enemy chose to charge during the first ships rearming cycle? The photons could be switched to normal loads but that would not be much of a deterrent.

You are close to correct Ensign; let me explain a better use of your idea. In this case the second FFG will be holding overloads. The first FFG will begin to rearm but will rearm as overloads, about 75% into that rearming phase the second FFG will switch to proximity charges and hit the target at range again. In this way the enemy cannot charge without a risk of facing overloaded weapons at close range.

Now lets take this example to a bigger picture. Lets put a CA into the mix with the FF squadron. The CA will be the obvious command ship and the FFs the escort. We will use the same tactic but this time the FFs will just hold their overloads and phasers. The CA will use its phasers and proximity torpedoes for mid range combat.

Can anyone tell me why we have the CA fire its weapons at range and the FF's hold back?"

This time the room stays silent, it was obvious these kids were realizing that they did not have all the answers yet.

"The CA will use its weapons to engage the enemy at range. The reason it can use all its weapons is that the FFs provide the cover it needs. While it is rearming the FF's still possess all their phaser and photon firepower to protect the CA. So if an enemy chose to close it will still face a rain for fire that would crush a shield and hurt him bad. Plus the combined phaser fire of the FFs should be more than enough to handle almost any drone attacks."

Ensign Mitchell stood up; this time looking a bit confused and no longer having the smug look she started the class with. "Sir, wont the FFs running with overloads cause problems though? I mean how do they maintain speed and keep overloads plus rearm phasers if needed?" "Excellent question Ensign! You see in single ship combat we preach that speed is life. However in fleet actions it is not needed as much." Admiral Crisler smiled at the confused look on everyone's face. "The fleet will maintain a slower overall speed, usually between 13 and 17. At this speed the CA can keep ECM and ECCM levels high as needed as well as arm weapons and provide extra shield power. The FF's don't need the ECCM since they are armed for close fighting; hence they use the extra power for ECM and shields to hold fast.

You see the reason we preach the mantra of speed is to combat seeking weapons. In single ship combat the seeking weapon is used less to hurt the target than to coral the target or make it waste firepower. Once its firepower is reduced the enemy moves in for a quick and close battle pass then pulls back and does it again. This is why we use high speed in solo fights. To make seeking weapons less of a threat and conserve our firepower for the enemy ship.

Now in fleet engagements the rules change. The escorts provide our cover for the seeking weapons strike. Also their heavy weapons give us time to rearm the capital ship. Because with these heavy loads, any ship closing risks a much heavier hit."

Ensign Mitchell again stands, "So sir what you are saying is, the escort holds its weapons for only near threats, say range 4 or less from the fleet capital ship? Or in direct defense of the ship, such as from drone or plasma fire?"

"By Jove, I think you got it Mitchell! This is the key to making this system work. The escorts allow the main ship to use ALL its weapons for offensive actions. Normally a ship must hold back part for counter strikes and defense. However the escort vessels become the counterstrike weapon of the main ship. The key is to stay close, but not to close. I suggest an escort stay about range 3-5 from the main ship. Also the escort must maintain a slightly higher speed than the main ship.

Now lets throw a wrinkle at you. We have a Destroyer and a Cruiser, which is the escort?"

A voice from the crowd throws out, "The DD sir, it is the smaller vessel."

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# Energy Allocation Explained

Dennis Greene

Outside of shooting your opponent effectively, the management of your ship's limited energy resources is your most crucial skill. Every action you take in the game when it comes to your ship, requires energy to perform.

Your energy pool is the total energy output from warp engines, impulse engines, auxiliary power, warp reactors and to a limited extent, even your battery power. You'll have to manage that energy to power the systems on your starship. As you suffer from battle damage, this task becomes harder as your power sources become damaged.

I listed batteries as a power source, but you must be aware that batteries are a limited and "Finite" form of power. Once the batteries are drained, that source for power is no longer available. Use them in an emergency or when you need power immediately and your standard sources are tapped out powering other systems. As you can see in the charts below, the battery is the lowest priority system on the ship, so it will be powered up last with any excess power. Remember that. You'll need to have unused energy by any other system, whether that be from movement, ECM, EM, weapons, etc, for batteries to restore its power for later use.

I have created tables below, broken down by race for easy reference, that lists the priority your ships for that race need to manage its power. The higher the number, the greater its importance in receiving power before those listed below it. Therefore, if a lower priority system is one you want to ensure has power, then make sure you either shutdown the higher rated system, or that the higher rated system is fully powered.

Now a simple examination of these tables will show you that phasers will draw power before your heavy weapons. This is an important revelation. If you lower your phaser capacitor slider from 100% to a lesser percentage (like 50%, or 75%), then you in essence free your ship for power. Setting it all the way to zero is an effective way to "turn" off phasers without having to turn off the specific hard points. But by lowering the setting you can, because this reduces the energy drain that the phasers will draw, lower it's priority. It doesn't really, but for our purposes, if it makes it easier for you to see it, then think of it that way. What reducing the slider on the capacitor really does is trade "Time" for "Power", so that if you have 8 phasers (8 power drain), in a weapon arming cycle, by setting the capacitor to 50%, you drain 4 power from your ship over TWO arming cycles. Enabling those heavy weapons, or other systems to draw power for themselves.

So learn these tables and see how the various systems interact with each other and which systems will drain and power themselves before the others and use this to your advantage.

Some things that are taken for granted, in the tables below are:

1) Movement will draw any available power based on what is in use or in demand and what you set as the speed. If a system is not fully charged and in a "holding" state, Movement has a higher priority, and will draw power away from it. If a system is already in a "holding" state, movement commands cannot rob it for power.

2) Some systems draw power consistently in the

game, regardless of race/ship you are using, these are:

- Life Support for 1 power (always)
- Fire Control for 1 power (always)
- Shields for 2 power (this does not include reinforcement)
- Deep scan for 3 power (while active) - Scanner priority
- Defensive tractor for 1 power per tractor used (if power is available)
- ECCM and ECM for 0-6 power (if power available) - Sensor priority
- General tractors for 1,2,4,8 and 16 power, depending on setting and if power is available.
- Transporter .2 power per transporter in use at time of use.

3) Movement costs (standard, HET and EM) vary by ship "class" this table shows their costs:

Below and on the next page are the System priority charts by Race:

Various Movement Costs			
Movement Class	Cost to Move 1 Speed Unit	HET	EM
1	.5	2.5	3
2	.67	3.35	4
3	1	5	6
4	1.5	7.5	9
5	2	10	12

Federation Systems Priority					
System	Priority Rating	System	Priority Rating	System	Priority Rating
Shield Reinforcement	60	Photon Torpedo	30	Shuttle Bay	20
Phaser G	60	Scanners	20	Probes	20
Phasser 3	55	Sensors	20	Drones	20
Phaser 4*	50	Tractors	20	Battery	10
Phaser 1	50	Transporters	20		
Plasma F	39	Labs	20		

Klingon Systems Priority					
System	Priority Rating	System	Priority Rating	System	Priority Rating
Cloak	70	Disruptor	45	Shuttle Bay	20
Shield Reinforcement	60	Scanners	20	Probes	20
Phasser 3	55	Sensors	20	Drones	20
Phaser 4*	50	Tractors	20	Battery	10
Phaser 2	50	Transporters	20		
Phaser 1	50	Labs	20		

Romulan Systems Priority					
System	Priority Rating	System	Priority Rating	System	Priority Rating
Cloak	70	Plasma F	39	Tractors	20
Shield Reinforcement	60	Plasma G	35	Transporters	20
Phasser 3	55	Plasma S	30	Labs	20
Phaser 4*	50	Plasma R	25	Shuttle Bay	20
Phaser 2	50	Scanners	20	Probes	20
Phaser 1	39	Sensors	20	Battery	10

Gorn Systems Priority					
System	Priority Rating	System	Priority Rating	System	Priority Rating
Shield Reinforcement	60	Plasma F	39	Tractors	20
Phasser 3	55	Plasma G	35	Transporters	20
Phaser 4*	50	Plasma S	30	Labs	20
Phaser 2	50	Plasma R	25	Shuttle Bay	20
Phaser 1	50	Scanners	20	Probes	20
		Sensors	20	Battery	10

(Charts continued on next page)

# Tactical Tidbits: *Team Tactics*

Nicholas A. Cioran

While Star Fleet Battles began as a game of the cruiser duel, it soon grew to encompass group or fleet actions. In Star Fleet Command the dynamics of multiple player games are much different than in a board game, where there is ample time to make decisions and plans.

Without the time to consider each move thoroughly, decisions must be made on the fly and in the heat of the moment. Presented here this month are some tools to help you make those decisions.

You will probably notice that there are some contradictory tactics here, but you have to remember, no battle plan survives contact with the enemy, and there is no such thing as an unbreakable rule in war.

### The Unspoken Rule

#### Kol Korvus, Black Fleet

The unspoken rule of team combat is communication. Teams that talk to one another can more readily interact with each other, and more readily adapt to the ebb and flow of combat.

Whatever tool you use, whether it is typing, or one of the various voice communication tools available, this is an essential element of team play.

### The 1st, 2nd, & 3rd Rules of Team Combat

#### Lasermagic, Black Fleet

1. The first rule of team combat is stay together!
2. This goes hand in hand with the second rule, which is fire together!
3. Fire discipline, in combination with a close formation will allow your team to concentrate on a single target and a single shield, making your fire much more effective than that of separated or randomly firing units.

### Plasma blast

#### SFCShadow, House of Chang

Players in "fleet" actions have a tendency to group together, use this to your advantage. If your a plasma armed ship, lead with one or more type R, S, and G and set them to shotgun. Have the rest of your "Squadron" form up behind it at a 5-10k distance.

Close the distance and then have the lead ship fire it's heavy weapons as a shotgun (which will

automatically target each ship, and if you have multiple heavy weapons, each ship will be targeted multiple times), and specifically target it's type F's (if it has any) on choice targets. If you really want to cause panic and confusion, preselect your Plasma's and launch your psuedo's just prior to launching your shotguns. The confusion generated by the front ship suddenly "blasting" with massive numbers of plasma's will cause one of two reactions for your opponents.

They will either scatter, or pop weasels. Either way, your follow up group now has a much easier time of engagement, and the lead ship if Romulan can avoid destruction by engaging cloak in the confusion and silently move away.

### The Wolf Pack

#### Kol Korvus, Black Fleet

When several smaller units engage a larger one they are often at a serious disadvantage. Even as a group they often cannot compete with the superior firepower, toughness, and electronic warfare capabilities of the larger unit.

However, by splitting up and surrounding their opponent, the numbers of the smaller units can come into play.

Those being targeted by the larger unit can go defensive, using ECM and erratic maneuvers to protect them from the bigger ships guns.

Meanwhile, the target's companion(s) may nip in to bite at the more poorly armed and shielded hind-quarters of the larger ship, like wolves baiting a bear.

### Mix n' Match Teams

#### Kobe Korax, Black Fleet

Although most 2v2 and 3v3 seem to always be made up of teams composed of the same race, and often the same ship, teams where the ships are from different races are often very effective.

When both ships are from the same race, it certainly means that the ships will have a similar fighting style, and be able to fight well in the same ranges and arcs.

But when a team is composed of different races, the ships will often compliment each other quite well.

Plasma/Lyran Combination can be very effective.

The Lyran compensates well for the Gorn or Roms lack of direct fire weapons, and if an Anchor is achieved the Lyran ESGs combined with the Plasma ship's strike is almost guaranteed to destroy the enemy. The Lyran can also turn off disruptors, and keep pace with the faster plasma ships.

One of the greatest advantages to mixed race teams is not in the tactics this allows the team with mixed races, but in the difficulty it presents to your opponents. Many players, even very skilled players, fall into using a specific set of tactics against certain races and ships. When confronted with a pair of ships from different races, they will often have difficulties with their flying, as they do not have a set of tactics developed to deal with the situation.

### Saber Thrust

#### SFCShadow, House of Chang

Sometimes it is worth sacrificing for the the glory of the empire. When facing Federation ships, send one ship in ahead of the squadron/fleet, and let it absorb as many photons as it can. then the rest of the squadron can close and for two turns exchange uninterrupted close range salvos of phaser/disruptor vs the Federation response of phaser only.

You can prolong this duel on your terms by using Hit and Run teams and destroy the Photons before they get a chance to rearm. Then it is a matter of time and you have all the advantages.

### Break and Attack

#### Novac, Tok El Nor

In team battles, a tight formation will guarantee concentration of firepower. However, in high speed plasma vs plasma battles, it is often far superior to break and attack, providing one ship does not get completely cut off from the rest of the pack.

By breaking the formation, this allows the split group to outmaneuver the single formation by cutting down their angles of movement. Advanced maneuvering in this way can even prod the single formation into a map edge or corner, further limiting their movement options.

*(Continued on page 12)*

## Energy Allocation Charts Continued...

Hyrdan Systems Priority					
System	Priority Rating	System	Priority Rating	System	Priority Rating
Shield Reinforcement	60	Fusion Beam	31	Labs	20
Phaser G	60	Hellbore	25	Shuttle Bay	20
Phasser 3	55	Scanners	20	Probes	20
Phaser 4*	50	Sensors	20	Battery	10
Phaser 2	50	Tractors	20		
Phaser 1	50	Transporters	20		

Lyran Systems Priority					
System	Priority Rating	System	Priority Rating	System	Priority Rating
Shield Reinforcement	60	ESG	30	Shuttle Bay	20
Phasser 3	55	Scanners	20	Probes	20
Phaser 4*	50	Sensors	20	Battery	10
Phaser 2	50	Tractors	20		
Phaser 1	50	Transporters	20		
Disruptor	45	Labs	20		

# System Refinement

James E. King III

Playing games on the Internet requires that your computer is properly configured and up-to-date. If you are having problems playing SFC, or any other game, the most likely cause is improper configuration of some special settings in your computer. (The other obviously likely cause is a bug in the game.) By modifying some of these settings you will help to create a better on-line gaming community, as well as reducing the chance that you are the cause of a game going south.

Most people can tell you horror stories about how many problems their computers have had. In this age of more complicated software systems, it also becomes more difficult for software vendors to fully test and ship a product that is free of defects. To accommodate this problem, patches are made available that fix a wide variety of problems. Almost every part of your operating system can be patched to fix problems, or tweaked (a term generally used to describe the act of changing a setting) to improve performance or reliability.

## Standard Computer Maintenance

**Importance: High**

**Skill: Beginner**

**Frequency: Weekly**

If you are using Windows 98, your computer already has tools installed to help you do some regularly scheduled maintenance. This is just like giving your car an oil change every 3,000 miles. Regular maintenance ensures your computer will operate more smoothly.

This maintenance consists of 3 parts. First, Disk Cleanup will delete some temporary files on your computer such as cached Internet pages and pictures. Second, Scandisk will check your computer's hard drive for possible errors and correct them. Finally, Disk Defragmenter will organize the programs on your computer so that they will load faster. This means it will take slightly less time to boot your computer as well as load large games.

This entire process can take an hour or so depending on the size and speed of your hard drive and how much data is on it. The defragmenter takes the longest amount of time – usually 90 to 95% of the total time – so it is run last. You can schedule these programs to run weekly but most people do not leave their computer on all day every day, and the schedule is usually missed. Furthermore, many hardcore computer optimizers prefer not to have to run the "Microsoft Scheduler" program in charge of running maintenance on an automatic schedule. Therefore, do this procedure once per week and you will help your computer to run smoothly. Instructions for Weekly Maintenance:

- ◆ Run Start->Accessories->System Tools->Disk Cleanup, when done
- ◆ Run Start->Accessories->System Tools->Scandisk, when done
- ◆ Run Start->Accessories->System Tools->Disk Defragmenter

## MTU (Maximum Transmission Unit)

**Importance: High**

**Skill: Beginner**

**Frequency: Once**

Microsoft ships Windows 9x with default settings that are optimal for running business applications on a Local Area Network [LAN]. These same settings can cause performance problems when used over slower dial-up Internet connections. The chief culprit in causing these problems is something called MTU, or Maximum Transmission Unit.

When you dial into your Internet Service Provider [ISP], your computer sends and receives information in chunks. Due to the unforgiving nature of telephone lines and systems, it is not uncommon for a chunk to get damaged as it travels over the phone line. When this happens, the chunk has to be re-transmitted. This can cause delays and decrease your overall connection speed, both of which can mean instant death during on-line gaming. What happens if that command you send to fire at someone gets damaged and has to be re-sent? The command arrives at your opponent's computer in a less than timely manner. This could mean the difference between your winning and losing a game.

## Instructions:

If you are using a high-speed (Cable Modem, DSL) connection to the Internet chances are you do not need to perform these steps, unless you have previously changed your MTU. Instructions are given below to optimize your MTU for modem speeds as well as for higher speeds.

1. Download and Install iSpeed from <http://www.hms.com/default.asp> iSpeed is a free program that makes it very easy to optimize your MTU.
2. Run iSpeed from the Start menu. On the right-hand side of the iSpeed window you will see a number of buttons.

If you have a low-speed Internet connection (56Kbps or less), click on the "Optimal Settings" button. You should see the MTU go from "Windows Default" to "Optimal". Other settings will change as well but they are not quite as important as getting the MTU correct.

If you have a high-speed Internet connection, click on the "Default Settings" button and then answer, "Yes". This will reset Windows to use all default settings – and that should be optimal for your high-speed Internet connection. Step 3: Reboot your computer.

## Drivers

**Importance: Very High**

**Skill: Medium**

**Frequency: Once Monthly**

The video driver is the most important gaming driver. You should keep current with all of your drivers by checking your manufacturer's web site for updates every month. Manufacturers generally provide adequate instructions for you to download and install new driver releases.

*Nvidia Video Card Users (TNT/TNT2/GeForce)*

If you have an Nvidia TNT/TNT2/GeForce based card you may want to try Nvidia's latest drivers (instead of your manufacturer's). Nvidia's

"reference" drivers are actually the drivers that the majority of the video card manufacturers use in their releases. Nvidia's reference Detonator driver supports all recent Nvidia based video cards and has proven to be extremely reliable. You can get the most recent Detonator driver (currently version 5.22) at: <http://www.nvidia.com/Products/Drivers.nsf>

*Sound Blaster Live! Users*

For people with Sound Blaster Live! Cards a new driver has been released; dated May, 2000. Get this at: [www.soundblaster.com/drivers/3dfx/VoodooVideoCards](http://www.soundblaster.com/drivers/3dfx/VoodooVideoCards)

For people using the Voodoo, Voodoo2, Banshee or Voodoo 3, the latest official drivers can be found at: [www.3dfxgamers.com/drivers/latest\\_drivers.stm](http://www.3dfxgamers.com/drivers/latest_drivers.stm)

## Modem Updates

Believe it or not, most modems can be patched to fix problems. There are two kinds of patches for modems. The first kind is called a firmware upgrade. This type of patch will update the modem itself to provide for higher reliability and speed. Modem manufacturers release firmware upgrades on a regular basis to fix these kinds of problems. You will have to check with your modem manufacturer to see if any firmware upgrades are available. All modem manufacturers have a web site (unless they have gone out of business), so start there. Warning: If a firmware upgrade fails, the hardware usually stops working. This means your modem could stop working if the firmware upgrade does not work properly. While the vast majority of upgrades work well, occasionally they do not.

The second patch for your modem is a driver update. The driver connects your modem to Windows, and unfortunately many modem manufacturers do not regularly update their modem drivers. Check your modem manufacturer's web site to see if there is a modem driver upgrade for your modem.

There is a very popular type of modem out there made by a number of manufacturers that is based on the Lucent Win Modem chip. Fortunately you can download the latest driver for this type of modem through the Lucent web site. The installation program does everything for you – you just have to run it. Before you get all excited, however, we need to check and see if your modem is one of these special modems. First, right-click on "My Computer" (on your desktop) and then select "Properties". Click on the "Device Manager" tab and then expand the "Modem" entry. If you see "Lucent Win Modem" in there, then you're one of the lucky ones. To upgrade your modem driver, go to the following web page on Lucent's web site: <http://www.lucent.com/micro/K56flex/driver2.html>

## Background Programs

There are a number of programs that may be loaded when you start up your computer. A number of these programs can use up valuable resources in your computer – memory and Internet bandwidth. As a general rule of thumb, you will want to avoid using programs such as ICQ or Microsoft Messenger while you play games. If you

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# My Brother the Orion

John Green

[Assembly Hall, Starfleet Academy, San Francisco, Earth Y2267]

As the Commodore stepped up to the dais, the graduating cadets all took their seats. Gazing out at the gathered crowd, he fixed his stare on the two blond, curly haired cadets who sat front and center among the graduates. After a moment, the Commodore began speaking while slowly transferring his gaze to the crowd.

"Honoured guests, Starfleet officers, parents, and graduating cadets, it is as always a distinct pleasure to be the reviewing officer at Starfleet Academy graduation exercises. Looking out on these cadets and knowing that they are the future of the Federation is indeed a great comfort to me and, I'm sure, to all gathered here today celebrating their passing out of the Academy. You cadets have achieved a level of excellence that few in the United Federation of Planets can equal. Foremost among your achievements is the ability to work as a team and to get the most out of your ships, your people, and your selves. With that in mind, I direct your attention to the two young gentlemen seated front and center." As he spoke, he alternated his gaze between the cadets and the crowd. "Ladies and gentlemen, it is my honour to present the award of top cadet to one of these two cadets. This was not an easy decision. Both of these young gentlemen have exhibited an excellence unmatched in the many years of the existence of Starfleet Academy. The level of competition between James and Joseph Grant has not gone unnoticed among the officers and instructors here at the Academy. With that in mind, I would ask that all assembled here today remember this moment, because you are witness to the start of two careers that will surely rise, as cream is apt to rise, to the top. Having said that, will you all stand and join me in awarding the Kauffman Award to the Top Starfleet Cadet for Academy class 67-01 to James Grant." The crowd broke into applause as James separated himself from the crowd to join the Commodore on the dais. He ascended the steps, stopped one pace away, saluted the Commodore, took one pace closer, and with an ear to ear grin, accepted the plaque. Taking one pace back, he saluted again and proceeded to stand off to the side. When the applause died down, the Commodore again addressed the crowd. "I must say to Joseph..." With that, a hush fell over the crowd as they all noticed that Joseph's seat was empty. In his place were his graduation scroll, newly awarded ensign pipes, and his cap. Joseph Grant had left the building.

[Y2277]

Looking up, he could see the Romulan WarEagle closing his position on the screen. As he looked around, he didn't recognize the bridge. It was clearly a starship bridge, but what class, he couldn't say. One thing was certain, it wasn't Federation. In fact, he could see multiple races manning the various stations. As he looked up again, he could see that the WarEagle was about to pass them. He looked down at his command console on his chair. As if by its own volition, his hand flipped up a small pad on the chair arm. Below was a large red button, perhaps two centimeters in diameter. Still of its own volition, his hand reached for the button but stopped in mid movement. Looking up,

a Gorn was holding a phaser on him. As if in slow motion he could see the Gorn's mouth move, but he couldn't hear a word. A muffled sound was ringing in his ears. He strained to hear it, only to realize that it was his own voice, obviously answering the Gorn. The Gorn spoke again, but he looked down and started to reach for the button. His body vibrated from the impact of what was apparently a phaser blast to the left shoulder. The WarEagle was passing them. He looked up one last time and could sense his hand touching the button. Suddenly his body was engulfed by intense searing heat.

"AAARRRGHHH!"

"Sir! Sir! Wake up!"

He shot up in his bed. Someone was bracing him by the shoulders. He looked around bewildered. He couldn't quite see clearly. He wiped the sweat from his eyes and stared at the ensign holding him. Slowly, realization dawned.

"Ba!" His throat was so dry he couldn't speak. Slowly he swallowed and tried again. "Barlow. What time is it?"

"Time for your watch, sir. You weren't waking up to the computer summons. You're actually late. The Captain wants to see you on the bridge."

"Tell him I'll be right there."

"You sure you're all right, sir?"

"Ya, ya, I'm fine. I'll be right up."

[Bridge, Federation DD USS Perry]

As the turbolift door opened onto the bridge, Lt. Commander Grant, as always, was struck by the level of activity. Yeomen passing between stations with communiqués, chatter over the communication circuits, and people in twos and threes discussing various operational dilemmas. Captain Westcott swiveled in his seat to glance at Grant, and then swung back to finish reading a datapad a yeoman had just given him for his signature.

As he swung back, he spoke. "Barlow tells me you were in rough shape when he woke you up. Having those nightmares again, James?"

"Yes, sir. They seem to be coming a little more frequently these days."

"Have you seen the Doc about it?"

"Not recently. Doc and I don't see eye to eye on this. If he had his way I'd be back at Starbase 12 undergoing invasive surgery to see what makes me tick."

"Ya, well, in the interest of your health, you go see him."

"Well, I'm on watch right now, and I don't th..."

Westcott spun to look his first officer in the eye. "Go see him." It was said quietly, but the order in his voice was clear.

"Yes, sir. Right away."

As Grant turned to the turbolift, he could hear the Captain behind him. "Pokotelo, Lt. Commander Grant will be detained for a while. Please arrange for your own relief until he returns. Science! Where is that report on the nebula? Should have had readings for me ten minutes ago!"

[Sickbay, Federation DD USS Perry]

The doctor put away his medical tricorder while shaking his head. "It's like I told you before, James. You really should check into the psionic

section at Starbase 12 and have them examine you further. You are experiencing dramatic drops in serotonin levels, which are causing massive mood swings. In most cases, I'd say there was a medical reason. In your case, you are one half of twins. There is compelling evidence to suggest that twins that interact have substantially lower serotonin levels, because the interaction effectively shares the required level."

"I told you before, Joe and I haven't seen each other in years. He walked out of the Academy on graduation day, and I haven't seen him since. He hasn't contacted my folks or me; he just dropped off the face of the universe. Frankly, I couldn't care less if he ever re-appears."

"Well, what is happening right now could suggest that he is nearer than you think."

"It's a moot point. I won't be talking to him in any case."

Just then, the lights dimmed. "Red alert! Red alert! All hands to battle stations."

Relieved to be given an excuse to end the discussion, Grant headed towards the emergency bridge.

[Emergency Bridge, Federation DD USS Perry]

Grant took his seat in the emergency bridge. "Bridge, emergency bridge. XO is closed up. What we got, sir?"

"Freighter group being pursued by an Orion destroyer. Looks like a war destroyer class. We should be an even match for them. Keep abreast of the situation, James, and give me your input as usual."

"Aye, aye, sir," came his crisp response.

Over the network, Grant could hear tactical information being passed back and forth. While action was unfolding on the bridge, Grant brought up a tactical display showing him the latest information available on the situation and the surrounding terrain. Just to starboard and slightly aft was the nebula that they were charting. Ahead he could see three freighters running towards them. The plot showed an Orion destroyer closing. Reports indicated sporadic fire from all ships. The freighters fending off the attacker. The Orion firing to drop a shield without damaging the goods too much. The Perry closing at maximum battle speed. Once the Captain ordered proximity photons charged, the Perry's speed dropped dramatically. The next instant, the Orion changed course and started heading for the Perry.

"What the hell is he doing?" said Westcott. "Why come after us? That's not what Orions do."

Grant piped up. "He's seen that we're alone. He's almost our equal as long as the freighters don't get a lucky shot off to ruin the balance, and if he can remove us as a threat, then he's free to pick off the freighters as he pleases."

"Good point, Commander. Maybe we can use that to our advantage. Let's see how far we can draw him off. Helm, plot a course for the nebula."

"Aye, aye, sir," came the reply.

"What have you got in mind, sir?"

"Just see if we can play cat and mouse with him long enough for help to arrive, or for the freighters to escape."

"How about this, sir?" He entered calculations that showed up on the tactical display. "Set course  
(Continued on page 14)



## The Drink of a New Galaxy

J. Jeffery

**Chicago, Terra (GAP)** Well it would seem that the soft drink giant's war rages on after hundreds of years. Ekoc Soda announced last week that it has made an exclusive contract with the Lyran Democratic Republic (LDR) for an undisclosed amount, while Popso Soda announced a similar deal with the Planet Orion. Well, this reporter decided to find out what all the other empires opinions were. I hired a crack team of Polltakers to head out to the far reaches of the galaxy to look deep inside the empires to see what the actual populations drank. My first team was assigned to the United Federation of Planets (UFP), with the exception of Orion, as it had an exclusive contract. The population of the UFP was extremely exuberant about what they drank, with 48.49% drinking Ekoc followed by a far second tie between Popso and Practitioner Spice at 24.24% each. Not surprising since Ekoc has been aggressively advertising and targeting Starfleet. This team then headed for Klingon space, they got most of the way through the empire without any major problems. When they arrived at an outpost on the elusive Tholian border the place erupted when 1 Klingon shouted, "Ekoc is the best", while another blasted "Popso is better". This erupted into:

"Ekoc is number one, because my House is the best"

"Popso is above numbering, because my House is above yours"

"You dishonor my family? Ekoc tastes great!"

"Popso is less filling! And your house is the cess-pool of the empire!"

This, of course erupted into a brawl of epic proportions, as well as a class of words from other members present who laughed at the sheer lack of knowledge of the drinks the two combatants expressed. When the crew arrived back in our office and tallied what the Klingon's overall favored, we found that 28.57% preferred Hillside Tears and a three-way tie was a close second consisting of Ekoc, Popso, and Practitioner Spice at 21.43% each.

The next team had the Mirak Empire as it's first place to survey. Amazing, all went well within the bounds of its territory, despite the few border clashes with the Lyrans that resulted in everyone spouting words across the empire. The great Mirak wanted nothing less than Hillside Tears at 47.37%, while only 21.05% wanted Practitioner Spice. The team had slight problems crossing over into the Lyran Empire, but since there was no real war going on between the two Empires at the moment, it was just a three-day delay at customs. It was here that the Orgenthian member of the team found out why you don't mention similarities between Lyrans and Mirak (His remains have yet to be finished cleaned up and sent home). After that incident, all went well and when the team finally made it back to the office, they had a few stiff drinks and counted the results. Amazingly enough, the Lyrans and Mirak were close on what they liked to drink, With the Lyrans at 42.86% for Hillside Tears, and 23.81% for Practitioner Spice.

Being as the Romulan's are suspicious of any outsiders coming into their territory, we decided it was best to send a team of Vulcan's to perform the survey. After a brief two week customs check at the border, the team began it's research at Romulus. All went well until they arrived on Remus and the local Police stopped the team, one member was accused of spying. And when he adamantly denied spying, they asked, "well why should we believe your not lying?" to which he replied, "Vulcan's do not lie", at which point he was promptly vaporized on the spot. The police then confronted the rest of the team, who found Logically it was in their best interest to deny knowing the other Vulcan. After all was said and done, the team found that the Romulan's preferred Popso at 38.46%, with a far tie of Ekoc and Practitioner Spice at 19.23% each. The team then hitched a ride on a smuggler's ship to Gorn Territory to continue their research. They found no real problems in Gorn territory after proving that they were truly Vulcan's. The Gorn's are amazingly tight about what they drink, with

31.03% preferring Practitioner Spice, followed by 28.57% for Hillside Tears; Ekoc was third with 24.14%. And Regal Cream (RC), who we we're surprised to see still hanging in after 500 years of Ekoc/Popso domination was at 17.24%. The unusual thing we found was that out of all the Gorn's we surveyed, not a single one preferred Popso. Maybe this was due to the accidental poisoning that occurred 50 years ago, considering Gorn's hold grudges forever.

We sent special teams to the Hydran Empire and the Interstellar Concordium (ISC) since they were so far away. In Hydran space we found out why RC was still in business after so long, it seems they had set up factories on the old colonies and have an exclusive contract with the Hydran Navy. 57.14% of the Hydrans drink RC, Astounding results. Maybe due to the exclusive contract, or maybe it's the name, who knows on this one. The team that went to the ISC had a few border problems, but was eventually allowed in (a month later). Once inside they found a system similar to the UFP, Planets were abundant and it took awhile longer to finish the survey. After it was all done, we found that 31.82% of the ISC preferred Hillside Tears, Followed closely by Practitioner Spice at 27.27% and then Ekoc at 18.18%.

Finally, once everyone was back at the office, we combined the number and calculated the overall favorite drink of the Galaxy. The numbers show that 23.18% of the galactic population prefers Hillside Tears, followed closely by Ekoc and Practitioner Spice at 21.82% each. RC, the underdog in the race, is preferred at 18.18%, while Popso came in last at a flat 15%. After all this, we can see why Popso signed an exclusive contract with the planet Orion. The planet Orion has been suspected in covertly supporting the Pirates in the Galaxy and if Popso has a contract with Orion, then they most likely can spread their product farther and cheaper using pirates. Maybe it's time the UFP Council to investigate the dealings of Popso and see what's truly happening.

## Featured Ship: *Hydran Ranger* continued

(Continued from page 3)

peck at the target from long range but keep them close. If the enemy closes to take out the fighters he is dead, you can nail him with your overloads and gatlin. If he stays at range the fighters will pick him apart. The choice of death is his.

### The Hydran Anchor

This is the Hydran version of the Gorn anchor and a variant of the Cruiser role. Basically you tractor an opponent, and blast him with all of your heavy weapons. This prevents him from getting

away from the attack and costs him power if he tries to break the tractor beam. However, this is used in a slightly different way for the Hydrans. You can use normal loads with this attack, because your goal is to drop a shield. Once the shields are down, your hit and run raiding parties can swarm the ship and take out the primary weapons. This can be dangerous, though, if your opponent has an alpha strike ready for you, so the best approach is from the back or sides, not directly to the front.

### Conclusion

The Ranger can be a formidable opponent if played correctly. One must be careful, but at the same time bloodthirsty and unrelenting. The Ranger is one of the most flexible warships around, despite the apparent short coming of its heavy weapons. Hopefully these few notes presented will help you in your next fight. The Ranger takes a particular breed. One that isn't afraid to get in close and get their nose bloodied. It hurts, but the rewards are delicious.



<http://www.starfleetuniverse.com>

## SFCC Status Report

Dennis Greene

### Beta Campaign 1.4b Turn 3 GNN Special Report

Since last month's report, the Coalition forces have maintained their pressure on the Alliance forces. Primarily keeping the Hydran and Gorn empires at bay while they gnaw on the fringes of the Federation. Federation leadership has again had a turnover and a new President leads their forces in what appears to be a helpless defense. There is much bickering and infighting within the Federation, with one admiral or another putting forward their particular agenda to be used in defense of its borders. This has rendered the defense of the Federation to be mainly ineffective. This could be why the 2nd Federation President has stepped down, this reporter can only speculate. The only thing consistent about the Federation besides the constant infighting is that they have surprised everyone with their extremely aggressive defense. So aggressive in fact that much of its military has been whittled away in unimportant fights for little or no gain. Can the Federation maintain this attitude and still defend itself against the ever increasing power being brought against it.

Although the coalition is doing well in preventing the Federation allies from doing much to assist

in the alliance part of the war, they still haven't been able to do much against the Federation as far as gaining territory is concerned. This has been at a terrible cost to the Federation though, and the pressure building up on the Federation borders (especially from the Romulan and Klingon boarders), reminds this reporter more of a gathering tidal wave, that will sweep all that is before it in destruction. I expect that by Y35, what little remains of the once proud Federation navy will melt before the onslaught and the Federation will be overrun with little in the way of assets to prevent this. Desperately the Federation has tried all means legal and illegal to prevent a disaster it has placed itself in, with the orders to defend everything and fight till the last man directive from its admiralty.

The Gorn's weary eye the Romulan boarder and gnash their teeth in frustration not only in the Federations headlong rush to the headman's axe, but because the Romulans have place on it's border with the Gorn empire sufficient forces to make it nearly impossible for the Gorns to make any headway without significant losses and the Gorn leadership knows this.

The Hydran's have had more debates then the Federation and Gorns combined as to what would

be the appropriate response and the treaty of Dresden expires in just 2 more months. They know that the window of opportunity they had to strike without both the Lyrans and the Klingons to retaliate has drifted through their arms like their noxious atmosphere. Although they begin to show signs of life, it is considered by many (including many Hydrans) that it will be to little to late. It is looking very grim indeed for the Alliance.

### Game Status Report

The 1.4b beta game is currently on hold as issues are being looked at for battle resolution, rules issues and leader changes. The staff at SFCC has turned the game over to the leaders in the game to primarily stress test the system and to see if the leaders will be capable of maintaining and managing their own game.

Another area that was worked on was a clarification of the movement and reaction rules. This has helped to make the rules read more clearly on this matter and stop some possible disputes.

Currently the leaders are developing methods for a "leader" council and how they wish to manage their campaign game. Hopefully the system they develop will be used as a model for the system when the game is released to the public.

## SFCC PBEM Status Report

E.L. Crisler

### PBEM Campaign Turn 3-4 GNN Special Report

In our last report we were awaiting reports from the Romulan frontier. Romulan forces attacked the Federation along three sectors. These attacks were aimed at removing key Federation stations. Two of the attacks were successful with federation stations and defensive forces destroyed. However the third battle resulted in federation forces emerging victorious, destroying all the Romulan attackers.

Hydran forces moved into Lyran space and declared open war on the Lyran Empire. In a brief battle Hydran forces were able to defeat Lyran ships and destroy an outpost. Further Hydran fleet maneuvers seem to indicate that they have committed to an all out war with the Lyrans.

Federation forces moved to consolidate after their defeats on the Klingon and Romulan fronts. They have fallen back to a second line of defense. Gorn forces continued to mass along the Romulan

border. The Gorn maneuvers appear to be designed to draw out the Romulan forces.

Meanwhile Lyran forces moved to take out a second Federation base and consolidate their breach into Federation space. They have also moved major fleet elements toward the Hydran border.

The Klingons continue their offensive, driving deeper into Federation space. At this point the Federation's systems of Orion and Bernard's Star are both under serious threat of attack. Federation forces have received reinforcements at Orion but that might be to little, to late.

Romulan forces have moved into position to launch strikes against various federation outposts along the borders. The Romulans also launched a major battle fleet into the Gorn Neutral Zone to engage Gorn forces there. The Gorn forces were able to defeat these Romulan forces and clear a path toward Romulan space.

Hydran forces moved to engage further elements of

the Lyran Empire as well as a battle fleet sent by the Klingons. Reports from the Hydran border are still being filtered, more information will be made available as it comes in.

### Game Status Report

The PBEM game is currently on hold as issues are being looked at for battle resolution. An early attempt was made to use the scripting tool created by Remus. However this script quickly was shown to have an easily exploitable flaw in the AI.

Another area that was worked on was a clarification of the movement and reaction rules. This has helped to make the rules read more clearly on this matter and stop some possible disputes.

At this time the game is about 75% done with its beta process. As we continue it is being used in conjunction with SFCC to test new rules ideas as well as make sure the existing rules work okay.



<http://sfcccampaign.tripod.com>

# Weapon System Breakdown: Phasers

By Dennis Greene

(Continued from page 2)

ening weapon in the game. It costs 2 power to arm and is the longest ranged direct fire weapon in SFC. I won't really go much in depth here, but as can be seen, it can deliver extremely potent damage out to range 17k, and moderate damage to 25k, and has a 50/50 chance of causing damage out to range 40. Beware the Ph-4.

## Part II - Effective Phaser Use

Every phaser uses power from a common energy pool. This is called the phaser capacitor and every ship that is armed with phasers, has at the top of your tactical screen the phaser capacitor slide bar. This bar is VERY important and most experienced and elite players use this slider to give them an edge in combat. Basically the phaser capacitor allows you to set how "fast" that capacitor recharges, not the amount of the charge it holds. The capacitor can be used for any phaser that can legally fire. The same phaser can pull from a fully charged capacitor many times before that capacitor needs to be recharged, or all the phasers can be fired at once and it needs to be recharged or any combination in between. Now consider what that means. You can drain the capacitor by firing all your phasers and wait the 20-30 seconds for it to recharge and for the phasers to reset. Or you can use what power is in the capacitor and fire the same phasers over and over (for the most part) once they reset and there is power in the capacitor.

Each weapon in the game, phasers included, have cycles they must go through before they may be fired again. Phasers have (assuming a game speed of 5-7), a recycle rate of 30-20 seconds respectively, even if there is power in the capacitor to use. Typically the phaser capacitor also takes the same period of time to fully "recharge", at the default 100% recharge setting.

By reducing the recharge rate you can still have more power available then you need for those particular set of phasers. It is very rare to be able to fire all your phasers at once. It can be done, but this can sometimes be wasteful, and dangerous if you face a missile armed, fighter armed, or plasma armed opponent. Most times (unless you face drones or fighters), setting this down to 50-75%, can free up some energy when needed for other things (like those power hungry heavy weapons, ECM, EM, or any number of options available to a savvy ships captain).

## Part III - Phaser Tactics/Drills

Many players think that their heavy weapons are the killing weapons, but the veterans know differently. Lets do a simple comparison of the phaser 1 and the archetype heavy weapon the photon torpedo.

Photon torpedoes take 2 power over 2 arming cycles to charge for a standard photon. This means

that before you can fire that photon, you need to have used up 4 power. Typically you won't be able to fire that photon immediately either, so expect one more weapon cycle to occur before you can shoot. It takes 1 unit of energy to hold a photon, so now your up to 5 units of power used over a span of 3 arming cycles. If the photon hits, for an investment of 5 power, you can do 8 damage. Or if you arm a standard cruisers compliment, you'll invest 20 power to deliver 32 damage every three turns (4 photons).

Lets look at the phaser 1 now. It requires 1 unit of power, we could arm 8 phasers the first two arming cycles and 4 phasers the third arming cycle. So for the same amount of energy we can arm 20 phasers in the same time we armed 4 photons. Now assuming that we fired those phaser 1's at range 5, we can do in that amount of time, a maximum of 100 points of damage, a minimum of 40 points of damage and an average of 70 points of damage. That photon torpedo will hit on the average of 67% of the time at this range. So it's maximum damage as I've already said is 32, the minimum is 0 and will average 16-24.

As can be seen here, the phaser is really your killing weapon. Heavy weapons are good for shield cracking, or to add extra damage to your opponent. Consider heavy weapons to be your big stick, or threat weapon, but the real threat is your phaser. They cycle faster and within close to moderate ranges more damaging then heavies. Heavy weapons should be considered your long range weapon, the weapon you use to soften up your opponent, but the phaser is the one that kills!

The problem is many players fail to recognize this fact and therefore have little or no skill for using their phasers on an opponent. Using them ineffectively and firing without effect or reason. Plus as I outlined earlier, phasers can be used 'defensively' as well as offensively. Used to kill drones, fighters and reduce the effectiveness of plasma's makes them the most versatile weapon in the game. To use them well, the player has to know the specifics on the effectiveness of his weapon and plan his tactics to take advantage of those specifics.

Something many players do in SFC is group their weapons "groupings" by weapon type, but what if you set them up by "range". Examine the above phaser tables and with the next article, try to setup your weapon groups not for type, but effective combat ranges. Say Group 1 is for short range, Group 2 for moderate range and Group 3 for long range. Group 4 for special weapons (like drones and ESG etc). Now you know exactly which weapon group to use based on the effectiveness of your weapons on range, not type and isn't that what it's all about, getting the most bang for your buck at

specific ranges?

You'll find that all tactics used and talked about in Hailing Frequencies are range based as much as "Type" based, but even then range is the primary consideration. So learn these tables, memorize them and apply that knowledge based on your range and how you fight your opponents. Here are some drills to help you practice your phaser skills and get you thinking Phasers as your primary weapon when you fight your opponents, because they will be!

### Drill #1

Play the standard cruiser on cruiser 1 on 1. Only, turn off your heavy weapons and don't turn them on again the entire battle. Using just your phasers, defeat your opponent (AI is fine for this drill) 10 times in a row. If you fail in one drill, start the count over again. This drill teaches you to use your phasers effectively, and also as an added benefit how you maneuver your ship to take advantage of your phasers and shield use to stay alive long enough to do it. You are NOT allowed to park yourself on one shield, but must try to fire off every phaser you have every arming cycle.

Variations -

Take a light cruiser against a heavy cruiser.

Take a Frigate against a heavy cruiser.

Take a Heavy Cruiser against a Dreadnought or Battleship.

### Drill #2

As above, but this time turn your heavy weapons on only after you've brought down 2 shields with your phasers. Make sure the shields you bring down are opposite shields. #1 and #4, or #2 and #5 or #3 and #6. You may only fire your heavy weapons on down shields. This drill teaches you how to use phasers to rip a shield down and then use your heavy weapons to cause the damage. After the above drill, you'll find this drill is easier. Use the same variations and you must win 10 times in a row before you can consider yourself the master of this drill. Again, you are not allowed to park on one shield. The point is to learn to move and shot, not fly in formation.

### Drill #3

This drill is similar to #2 above, but you turn off your heavy weapons after you've breached 2 shields (again opposite shields). You are NOT to fire your heavy weapons on a down shield. This drill teaches you to use heavy weapons to break a shield, but use your phasers to kill the opponent. You'll find that by the time you get to this drill, you'll have broken your heavy weapon mentality and are a leaner, meaner and much more dangerous opponent then ever before. Again, you must win vs the AI 10 times in a row before mastering this drill (by this time, it should be VERY easy).

Email us and let us know what you think of Hailing Frequencies;  
[openhail@startrekmail.com](mailto:openhail@startrekmail.com)

## Fleet Tactics: *Federation*

E.L. Crisler

*(Continued from page 4)*

“WRONG! In truth the CA and the DD have equal firepower. The advantage of the CA is that it can take a hit better and has more power. We make the CA the escort...” Before he could finish Ensign Mitchell was on her feet.

“Sir the reason the CA is the escort is because it has a better power curve, hence it can hold the overloads better and can rearm faster. Since the escort must be able to rearm quickly to provide cover it makes a better choice. Plus since the DD has less power it must go slower than the CA in order to arm its weapons. Since the escort needs to be a bit faster to cover more area the DD would force the CA to slow down, making the whole fleet maneuver slower. By making the CA the escort the DD can set the tempo of the fight and allow for a slightly higher fleet speed.”

“Excellent Ensign, you appear to have grasped the basics of this material. Now lets look at one more area of fleet tactics. In standard team battles the axiom is to stay together. In fleet actions this is not always a good thing. Sometimes it is better to split your fleet and tackle an objective from different angles. By doing this you limit the responses of the enemy and force him to a specific direction. With proper planning this can be most useful.

For example, say we have a fleet composed of 2

CAD and 4 FFG. The objective is to deal with a Klingon Base Station and a small defensive fleet. By splitting the fleet into two units we can make life for the Klingons miserable quickly. The CADs can fire drones from multiple vectors. This will force the base to use all it’s weapons defensively and not provide a safe space to hide a damaged shield in.

Now under standard thinking the Klingon ships will take this opportunity to attack one of the smaller groups, figuring they have it isolated. This is what we hope for. The escorts should be able to hold off the attack for a couple of battle passes by the Klingons. Plenty of time for the other group to deal with the now undefended base. Then the second group can join the first group to deal with the Klingon ships.

The idea here is to split your forces in a way you want and force him to split his forces to respond. The key to any engagement is to make the enemy respond to you. In that way he has to fight your battle, not you fighting his.

Time is almost up for this course so lets review. I will list the steps you must first follow to understand your fleet.

Determine your fleet makeup. Be sure you know the limits and advantages that each ship possesses. This will allow you to assign it the right job within

the fleet.

Set an objective, each battle has an objective to be accomplished. In single ship combat or small team engagements the objectives are clear. In fleet actions the objectives might not always be clear. Be sure you understand your objective so you can organize your fleet appropriately.

Assign tasks to each ship. Make sure each ship knows its job in the scheme of the battle plan, and that each ship follows that plan.

Force the enemy to react to your battle plan. If he must react to your plan then he cannot follow his. Make him change tactics in midstream.

Once the objective and the assignments are given make sure everyone understands their role. The escort vessel is there to support the main ships. In many ways this is as important if not more so than the role of the main ships. If your heavy vessels cannot accomplish their tasks without interference then the whole battle is lost. The main ships are there to perform a specific task. They must be sure to not vary from that task unless a special opportunity presents itself. Don’t let the main ships worry about seeking weapons or ships that are closing, that is the duty of the escort. Rather let them concentrate on the task at hand. A well-handled escort is the best weapon a capital ship can have.

Class dismissed....”

## Tactical Tidbits: *Team Tactics continued*

*(Continued from page 6)*

### **The Hammer and the Anvil Kol Korvuss, Black Fleet**

Teams with superior "Crunch" firepower have an excellent option for attacking targets with less destructive weapons. One ship can serve as the "Anvil", moving quickly to tractor and hold one of the enemy ships, absorbing their best shot.

Once pinned, the "Anvil's" teammate can arrive at a slower pace that will allow overloads and so forth, and deliver the "Hammer" blow that ought to effectively remove one ship from the game, allowing the Hammer and Anvil to do their worst to the sole survivor, two on one.

### **Joined at the Hip Lasermagic and Blakemagic, Black Fleet**

Teammates can often derive a significant tactical advantage from tractoring each other and flying in formation.

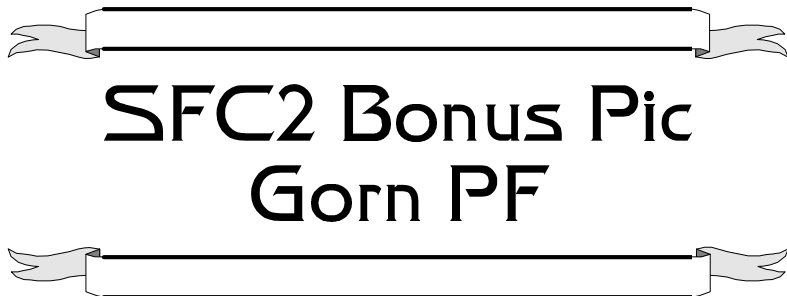
Not only does this help keep the formation together, but once "joined at the hip" they can adjust their speed quickly by changing their relative orientations, both a significant advantage in team play.

### **Move Along Little Dogies Damaged, Black Fleet**

It is a misconception to believe that the sole role of a support ship like a D6D, NCD, or SPJ is to deliver firepower to the enemy.

In a team game, the volume fire of missiles or plasma these support ships can deliver can be used to herd your opponents into difficult positions, and force them to make moves to your advantage, and inevitably, their disadvantage.

Thats all the Tidbits we have this issue. Be sure to check out the Tactical Tidbits Forum for Hailing Frequencies in the Forum section. Look there to see the theme for next months tidbits, post some of your own or discuss ones you have read here.





## Going Home

By Nicholas "Kol Korvus" Cioran

*Continued.....*

*(Continued from page 7)*

have a lot of memory (more than 128 MB) and a fast internet connection (Cable Modem, DSL), then you can probably keep these programs open while you play. Do note that sometimes these programs will open a window on you and may bring you out of your game unexpectedly, so it is best to turn them off while you play. Anti-Virus Software

The author of this article has experience using both Norton AntiVirus [NAV] as well as McAfee VirusShield [MVS]. NAV has a great virus protection updating system that allows you to download new information about viruses through a program called LiveUpdate. This program only downloads changes to your existing information, so it takes less time to update your virus definitions. Unfortunately some people have reported that NAV can conflict with SFC and other games. If you use Norton Anti-Virus you should make sure you are running the latest major release (check [www.symantec.com](http://www.symantec.com)), and also make sure you have run LiveUpdate (in the Control Panels) to get the most recent updates.

McAfee VirusShield, on the other hand, requires you to download the entire virus definition file whenever it changes. This means it takes much longer to update MVS. MVS also comes with a terrible "LiveUpdate" wannabe. This background program should be turned off. While it does keep you up-to-date with virus definitions and patches, it can also begin downloading files while you are playing. This can effectively kill your current game by clogging your Internet connection. Both virus programs work well, and both allow you to temporarily disable them from the task bar on the bottom of your screen. If you think you are having problems with your game due to your anti-virus software, try temporarily turning the anti-virus software off and see if your gaming improves. If it does, there may be an update from the software manufacturer to resolve the problem.

### Memory

When your computer runs out of memory it begins to use your hard drive to store extra information. Unfortunately, given the resource hog that Windows is, this happens fairly often. There is one good solution to this problem, and that is to buy more memory for your computer. Even machines with 128 MB of memory will slow down when loading some of today's larger and more compli-

cated games. The price of memory is fairly inexpensive right now – at about \$100 for 128 MB. To get the most speed out of your computer you may need up to 256 MB of memory. If you cannot afford to purchase more memory don't worry – it won't hurt you that much. If, however, you have severe lag in your games and your hard drive is crunching, then it is time to add more memory to your computer. Tweaking Miscellaneous Settings

There are some fairly common settings that everybody should double-check to ensure that they are getting the most performance out of their computer.

### System Performance Settings

**Importance: High**

**Skill: Medium**

**Frequency: Once**

Right-click on My Computer and select Properties. Click on the Performance tab. Click on the "File System" button. In the "Hard Disk" tab, make sure your "Read-Ahead Optimization" is set to Full. I have also seen that changing the role of the computer from "Desktop Computer" to "Network Server" allows games to load faster, especially on subsequent launches. You don't have to try this if you don't want to. Now click on the "CD-ROM" tab and set the "supplemental cache size" to "Large". Below that, make sure "Quad-speed or higher" is set for your "Optimize access pattern for" setting. Click on the "Troubleshooting" tab and make sure all the checkboxes are not checked – that is of course unless you know specifically that one should be. If one is checked, but you don't think you need any, write down the ones that are checked and then uncheck all of them. If you have problems with your computer later on, try checking the boxes again. Now click on the "OK" button – taking you back to the "Performance" tab. Click on the "Graphics" button and make sure that you have Full graphics optimization set, then click "OK". Click on the "Virtual Memory" button and make sure the "Let Windows manage my virtual memory settings (Recommended)" is chosen. It is best to allow Windows to handle this part of your system. Device Settings

Right-click on My Computer and select Properties. Expand the "Disk Drives" section and double-click on your hard drive. If you see a Settings tab, go into it and make sure that the "DMA" checkbox is checked. This will greatly increase the speed of

your hard drive by allowing the system to process disk drive transfers more efficiently.

### Advanced Tweaking

**Importance: Low**

**Skill: Expert**

**Frequency: Once**

There are some additional settings that can be changed using notepad on the SYSTEM.INI file. These changes may improve your systems performance and reliability, and they may also make things worse. For this reason, I would recommend you only try these settings if you are a seasoned computer user.

Edit C:\WINDOWS\SYSTEM.INI with NOTEPAD.

In the [386Enh] section, change or add the following lines:

```
PageBuffers=32
DMABufferSize=64
ConservativeSwapfileUsage=0
```

While you may expect that "ConservativeSwapfileUsage" would be a good thing, I have found that it causes instability when playing SFC. In the [vcache] section, change or add the following lines if you have 128 MB or more of memory:

```
MinFileCache=128
MaxFileCache=32768
ChunkSize=512
If you have 64MB of memory, try:
MinFileCache=128
MaxFileCache=12218
ChunkSize=512
```

### Conclusion

This concludes MagnumMan's first clinic on making your computer better. Please remember that changing drivers and/or settings may cause your computer to operate differently than you expect. Make these modifications at your own risk. (I am using all of them on my computer). I hope I was able to help someone! I will add more information to this thread later, including how to turn off some of those silly background processes that can suck some of your computer's speed away from the game.



SFC2 Bonus Pic  
Federation Fighter

## SFC II Interview: Fighters continued

(Continued from page 1)

fighters in SFC1 was the lack of any real control over the AI. When assigned to ships for defense they tended to run off. And when asked to attack they used near suicide tactics. Will any kind of new control be put into SFC2 to make using fighters effectively easier?

**Joshua Morris:** Yes. Fighters should pay attention to your orders. We obviously need to make sure this works.

**HF:** While we are near this subject anyway lets look at shuttles for a minute. Rumor has it in SFC2 you will be able to dynamically allocate shuttle usage as you wish, more like in SFB, is this true? If so can you give us more details?

**Joshua Morris:** This is true. I will have more details after the interface is implemented and ready to go.

**HF:** Will bases have modules like in SFB so that fighters and PFs can be added or will they automatically be a part of base defense?

**Joshua Morris:** We have many more base types in SFC2. These include bases with fighter modules.

**HF:** Okay we have explored fighters pretty well but lets take a look at the PFs. Will there be multiple PF types or just a single PF? (For example..

Leaders, scouts, etc...)

**Joshua Morris:** We have multiple Fast patrol ships planned.

**HF:** With the coming of PFs and Fighters, there is little doubt we shall see the Carrier or PF Tender. Will we see multiple variants of each for each race or just one of this ship type for each race? (Will we see light CVs using CL hulls or a DD with 2 PF links)

**Joshua Morris:** There will be multiple Carrier types of different sizes and capabilities.

**HF:** Since the Battleship made it for all races into SFC2, will the Space Control Ship also make it this time around?

**Joshua Morris:** That would require a race to have both fighters and Fast patrol ships. We could make variants but then they would just be carriers.

**HF:** SFC1 was a game of capital ship combat with some fighters thrown in. Will the addition of fighters in SFC2 cause any change to this basic style of play?

**Joshua Morris:** I think this will remain true. Carriers will show their worth towards an end of an era but we will make sure to limit their impact in the Metaverse. Carriers will be rare ships with smaller escorts needed to support them.

**HF:** In SFC, the multiplayer game was hurt due to lag. This situation was made worse when multiple drone ships were used and tons of small items occupied the screen (like fighters). Will the new Multiplayer code allow Fleet Carrier actions without a major lag problem?

**Joshua Morris:** The plan is to make sure lag isn't an issue will lots of fighters and drones. We are taking steps to make sure this is the case.

**HF:** Okay Josh we are to the last question for this time around. It has been a month since our last discussion. Do you have any new tidbits we can pass on to the SFC community that has not yet been made public knowledge? Don't worry Josh this is just between you and me :-)

**Joshua Morris:** Nothing at this time. I am very close on some issues but not quite ready to announce them. Maybe I will have something for you next month

Thanks again Joshua for all your support at HF and the community in general. We'll speak with Joshua again next month and see what new and interesting features we can discover regarding Starfleet Command Volume II: Empires at War!

## My Brother the Orion continued

(Continued from page 8)

160 mark 12. Put us in the nebula just to the left of that asteroid on its perimeter. Then we swing around to the right once he loses scanner contact. Since we have to slow down, we can overload the photons and maybe catch him as he follows us into the nebula by coming from the far side of the asteroid."

"Sounds good, Jim."

"It's James, sir, not Jim!"

"What are you talking about, Grant?" said Westcott; "All I said was good plan."

Confused. "Yes sir, sorry."

"Helm! Execute the Commander's plan. Try not to make the change too obvious."

"Aye, aye, sir."

On the tactical map, Grant could see the Orion closing at twice the Perry's speed, but they were going to enter the nebula at least 200,000 kilometers ahead of the Orion. As soon as the Perry was deep enough into the nebula to give off confusing sensor readings, Westcott ordered fire control powered down, photons overloaded, and helm to swing to the right.

"Helm, bring us around the asteroid. Tactical, engage fire control sensors and set counter measures to counter their ECM as soon as we clear the nebula."

As Grant watched the view screen in the emergency bridge, the gases of the nebula started to clear. Before long, he was looking at a vast array of stars. To his right was the huge asteroid that they were hugging closely. The feeling that the hull

coating was going to be scraped off at any minute was hard to ignore.

"Photons charged, phasers are ready. Fire control is responding, and ECCM is at two tetrajoules. Marines are reporting in from all defensive duty stations."

"Stand ready, everybody. They should be right in front if they kept to their course," said Westcott.

The Perry aligned herself along the edge of the nebula and straightened her course. As it started to separate from the asteroid, the sensor operator exclaimed, "Reading an ESG field materializing, sir!"

"Where?"

As if in answer to his question, the scanners picked up the warp signature of a ship coming from the other side of the asteroid, directly at the starboard side of the Perry. The unmistakable glow of an ESG field rammed the side of the Perry, to be quickly followed by a barrage of phasers. The Perry responded with a single phaser. As the destroyer passed over the top, two more phasers dented the Orion's number four shield. Grant picked himself up and managed to establish control of the view screen. In the distance, the Orion was heading away, toward the freighters.

"XO to bridge. Number three shield is down, three phasers are off line, and two photon tubes are inoperative. Orders, Captain?"

After a short delay, "XO, sir. The Captain is dead. You have command."

Training immediately took over. "Engineering, what is our status?"

"Warp power down to 40 percent, sir. Impulse engines at 50 percent. Batteries are gone altogether."

Dejected, Grant sat back. "Well, people, it looks like this one gets away. Comm, send a signal to Starfleet. Give them an update on the situation and request assistance. Helm, set course for Starbase 12, best speed. Engineering, get to work on those engines, first priority."

"Aye, aye, sir!" came the replies.

As Grant got up and headed to the bridge, he said under his breath, "Almost like he knew what we would do before we did it."

**[Admiral Hudson's Office, Commanding Officer, Starbase 12]**

"Once they saw how you fared, the freighters split up to increase their chance of getting some ships through," said Hudson. "If you hadn't given the Orion a reason to delay his attack, he would have had all three for sure. I listened to the logs, Jim..."

"James! Please, sir. Sorry. Only my brother ever called me Jim. And I'd just as soon not think about him."

With a disapproving glance at being interrupted, the Admiral continued, "Yes, well. I am familiar with your brother. A very promising cadet, I understand. Why did he leave Starfleet?"

"I haven't the foggiest, sir. He just up and left. Hasn't talked to my folks or me since the day he left. My mother gets quite upset every time his name comes up. So I just stopped talking about

(Continued on page 15)

## My Brother the Orion continued

(Continued from page 14)  
him.”

“Yes, well, James... I listened to the logs. It seems that your tactics, and I know that you were your tactics, were sound. Uncanny how that Orion knew where and when you would materialize from the nebula. However, that is history. Our concern right now is your future. As much as I would love to give you the Perry, it is going to be some time before she is ready. How does a brand spanking new DDG+ strike you?”

“A DDG? I'd love to be the XO on one of those.”

“I didn't say you were going to be the XO... Captain.”

“You can't be serious, sir? My own command?”

“The USS Athabaskan, right out of the shipyards. She needs a shakedown, but I know you're up to the task. Your promotion is effective immediately.”

“I certainly accept, sir, no question.”

“Since the Perry will be laid up, you will be assigned her crew after they return from leave.”

“Yes, Admiral, those old hands will be appreciated by a new captain.”

“Yes, I thought they might. Here are your posting orders.” Handing Grant a data disc, “Captain Grant, effective immediately, you can find the Atha'B' in docking bay November Charlie. Off you go, now. Don't keep the young lady waiting. You know how temperamental they can be when they are kept waiting.”

With an ear to ear grin, “Yes, sir!” as the door closed behind him.

**[Transporter room, Federation DDG+ USS Athabaskan]**

As Grant materialized on the pad, he was struck by the smell of a new ship. Stepping off the pad, he mumbled, “Ah, right from the dealer.”

“Excuse me, sir?” said the transporter technician.

“Nothing, just saying hello to a new girl friend,” he said with a grin.

“I know what you mean, sir. Welcome aboard, Captain,” the tech said with an equally big grin. “Athabaskan, sir. Never heard of her before. Do you know where the name comes from?”

Grant answered without hesitation, “It is a term from old earth history, from Canada, I believe. The Athabaskans were a language group of indigenous North Americans living along the Canadian Rocky Mountains. During Earth's Second World War, the Canadian Navy commissioned a destroyer by the name. She was in a scrap with a German destroyer force of three ships. She was sunk, but she and her sister, HMCS Haida, sank one and drove another ashore.”

“I didn't even know that the Canadians had a Navy during that war.”

“Third largest navy at the time, actually. Mostly destroyers, frigates, and corvettes, though. Anyway, my Atha'B' awaits.”

**[Bridge, Federation DDG+ USS Athabaskan]**

Pokotelo was at the science station getting the calibration finalized as Grant walked onto the bridge from the turbolift. All on the bridge stopped what they were doing to watch as their new CO got off the turbolift. Pokotelo braced and sang out,

“Captain on the bridge!” Grant looked around and circled the bridge, stopping to admire the commissioning plaque on the bulkhead. “We fight as one,” he said aloud as he read the ship's motto. The crew smiled as he moved toward his command chair. He stopped at THE chair, HIS chair. He looked around at each of the bridge crew in turn, and his gaze came to rest on the newly promoted Lt. Commander Pokotelo, HIS XO. Pokotelo simply nodded his head toward the chair. With a grin, Grant climbed into the chair. Slowly, and then with increasing vigour, the bridge crew began to applaud.

**[Bridge, Federation DDG+ USS Athabaskan, one month later]**

The yeoman walked away after Grant handed her the datapad. He turned his attention to the people gathered around the science station, who were busily calibrating sensors after the latest attack scenarios they had just completed.

“How does it look, Pok?”

“Sensors aren't registering the proper readings on the warhead strength, sir. We launch 12-megaton warheads, they read 24-megaton. We launch a 24, they register 12-megaton. Can't be that hard to remedy, but I just can't nail it down.”

“What about the sensor module itself? When was the last time a diagnostic was done on it?”

“Right after spacedock. I could send a team to do an EVA. All other diagnostics check out. It's the only option left to us.”

“Make it so, Pok.”

“Aye, aye, sir.”

**[Bridge, Federation DDG+ USS Athabaskan, ten minutes later]**

“Bridge, EVA one. You were right. The crystal reverberation chamber has a blockage in it. We're switching out the chamber so we can clean it properly when we get back inside.”

Slowly, a form started to take shape on the main view screen. At first, nobody noticed it, until, “Captain! Orion vessel coming into visual range on screen!”

“How the hell? Shields up, charge phasers.”

“Sir! We can't raise shields with the EVA team outside.”

Grant punched his communications console. “Transporter room, beam EVA one aboard immediately.”

The transporter room crew started to comply when suddenly Grant recognized the claxon of a fire alarm over the comm. “Captain! There was an explosion on the transporter pad, and the transporters are off line. We are getting the fire under control. EVA one still outside.”

“Phasers are charging, sir, but the fire control is inoperable without the sensor module.”

“Damn! Launch shuttles! How the hell did they get that close to us without being noticed?”

“Sensors and scanners are off line while the EVA team is outside sir.”

“Of course.” Mentally kicking himself for asking a question he already knew the answer to.

Looking more closely at the ship on the screen, “Anybody recognize that ship?”

Pokotelo said, “I think that's the same war destroyer that the Perry knocked heads with.”

“I think you're right. Do they have shields up?

Can't tell at this range.”

“Incoming signal from the Orion, sir,” said the comm operator.

“On screen.”

A slight gasp escaped those on the bridge as they found themselves staring at the face of their Captain, in a different uniform. Grant slumped back into his seat as he recognized his brother.

“Joe.”

“Oh! I guess I didn't fall off the face of the universe, did I, Jim?”

“What are you doing, Joe? Why the disappearing act for ten years?”

“No, no disappearing act, Jim. Just going in my own direction is all I'm doing.”

“I don't suppose you've talked to Mom yet.”

“Well, I don't know, Jim. How do you think she'll feel about her son the Orion?” The sarcasm clearly evident.

“Still, she'd like to know that you're alright, at least.”

“Listen, Jim. I didn't rig up all this just to talk over old times. I'm...”

“What do you mean 'rig up'?”

“Well, if you'll wait, I'll explain it. First, though, I don't think you should use that crystal reverberation chamber you're about to put in. It's defective also.”

“How do you know that?”

Looking exasperated, “Because I'm the one who made it defective, dolt! Jeez, you never really were any good at picking up on things sometimes. Okay, here it is in a nutshell. Your ship is your ship because I arranged for you to have it.” Holding up his hand to forestall another interruption, “Also, you will find various items on your vessel are defective, because I arranged that, too. I am beaming over some components that will correct all of your deficiencies. I figure it should take about two hours to install, and another three before you're convinced that they aren't booby-trapped or defective.”

“How do you think you were responsible for my being given command of the Athabaskan?”

“I have a few well placed operatives in Starfleet.”

“Hudson?”

With just a slight shrug of the shoulders, Joseph didn't commit an answer, but James knew it was true.

“So anyway, Jim, here's the scoop. You and I are going to tangle. We're going to find out who is the better captain once and for all.”

“You can't be serious Joe. These people have no quarrel with you. You want me? You got me! Beam me over right away.”

“No, Jim. I want you, alright, but right where you are. After you finish repairs, we are going to go head to head. No simulators, no backing out. If you're half the captain you think you are, we should have an interesting fight on our hands.”

“What makes you think I'm going to play your game, and what makes you think that I won't call for back-up?”

“Well, this is how it's going to work, Jim. First, you're going to make repairs. Then when I think you're ready, I'm going to destroy a freighter.

## My Brother the Orion continued

*(Continued from page 15)*

Then you will come running to save that freighter."

"Bit of a stretch if I know what you're up to, don't you think?"

"Nah, not really, Jim. You see, until you come to the rescue, I will keep finding targets until you show up. Then it's just you and me."

"And if I call for reinforcements?"

"Oh yes, well..." He motioned off to his side.

Seconds later, the Athabaskan's communication console exploded. The comm operator was killed instantly. As the Orion destroyer slowly turned and faded into the stars as it moved out of visual range, various components materialized on the bridge.

**[Bridge, Federation DDG+ USS Athabaskan, five hours later]**

"Bridge, Auxiliary control. We just finished diagnostics on the damaged systems. All systems operational, except for sub-space. The transmitters are all off line. We can receive, though."

"Okay," said Grant. "Give me a rundown on what systems he sabotaged."

"Seems he covered all the bases, sir. He disabled the sensors and transporters, and rigged but never initiated booby-traps on the scanners. He rigged the impulse and warp drives also, but never used that either. The sub-space, of course. All transmitters are off line, even on the shuttles. The emergency beacon is missing altogether, just an empty shell."

Off to his side Ensign Barlow was visibly sweating. "Barlow," said Grant gently, "I want you to work on some way of getting a message to Starfleet." That should keep him preoccupied.

"Yes, sir." The new task obviously having the desired effect.

"Tactical, are sensors reading properly?"

"Yes, sir, as far as we can tell. The 12-megaton drones read properly, but we don't have any 24-megaton drones left to calibrate with."

"Good enough. Okay, everybody, this is going to be a challenge."

Pokotelo spoke the question everyone was thinking, "How do we know he hasn't rigged any more of our systems, sir?"

"We don't. That's why we are carrying on with ship-wide full diagnostics for as long as we have time. If he wanted to win by default, he would have simply destroyed us instead of the communication grid, and been done with it. No, I think that he is as good as his word there."

"That's an awful lot of faith in an Orion pirate, sir."

Grant swung in his seat. "NO, MISTER POKOTELO! That is faith in my brother."

"Bridge, emergency bridge. Incoming transmission, audio only."

"Let's hear it, emergency bridge."

"Mayday, Mayday. This is the SS Maestro Falken. We are under attack by an Orion destroyer. We are running on course 164 mark 7, current location sector 2813 grid 067, 054, 025."

"Message repeats with location changes, sir."

"What have we got on the Maestro Falken?"

"A large freighter, last registered in this area,

sir. It looks legitimate."

"Engineering, are we set to go?"

"Warp power at 100%, sir."

Helm, lay in an intercept course. Engage at warp six."

Aye, aye, sir."

**[Bridge, Orion DW3 Ronin]**

The Gorn at the science station turned to look at the captain. "SSSir, here he comessss."

"Okay, keep up the attacks until he's closer and then we'll let the freighter go."

"Wassste of ressourcecesss, if you asssk me."

"I'll remember not to assssk you then, Sss'lorn." This gets a chuckle from the rest of the bridge crew. "Is the ESG capacitor charged yet?"

"Yes, sir," came the reply from tactical.

"Range to the Athabaskan?"

"350,000 kilometers."

"Helm, turn toward her. Cease fire on the Maestro Falken. Make sure that the phaser capacitor is fully charged before we get there. Helm, when the capacitors are charged, increase speed to 29. Tactical, save two phaser 3's for point defense."

**[Bridge, Federation DDG+ USS Athabaskan]**

"Sir, the Orion has broken off from the freighter. She's heading toward us, speed 29."

"Set electronic warfare to counter his. Are phasers charged yet?"

"Yes, sir."

"Helm, aim right for him and be prepared for a sharp turn to port on my command. Range?"

"200,000 kilometers."

"Charge photons, sir?"

"No, keep the photons off line. Prepare to launch drones on my command."

"He's slowing down, sir, speed 15. We should be safe from his ESG at that speed."

"He's not going to use the ESG."

"How do you know that?" Pokotelo said.

"I just do. Put all excess power into the number two shield. Range?"

"100,000 kilometers."

"At 50,000 fire all phasers and do a hard turn to port. Then launch drones."

**[Bridge, Orion DW3 Ronin]**

As four phaser 1's made impact with the Orion destroyer's number two shield, the Orion answered with its own three phaser 1's and two phaser 2's.

Sss'lorn turned to his captain. "The reinforcement abssorbed the majority of the ssstrike. The phassser 3'sss took out the droness as we turned away. How did you know he wass going to turn to port?"

"Because I can read what he's thinking. I don't think he understands that yet."

"What iss he planing nexsst?"

"He's going to keep up the phaser strikes for the next little while, and so are we."

**[Bridge, Federation DDG+ USS Athabaskan]**

Pokotelo turned to Grant. "Well, he had us pegged there. Lucky guess?"

"Maybe. I wonder." Hitting a button on his chair, "Doctor to the bridge. Bring your medical tricorder. Tactical, let me know when phasers are recharged."

"What are you thinking, sir?" said Pokotelo.

"Just a hunch."

Seconds later the doctor arrived on the bridge. "Yes, sir?"

"Doc, check my serotonin levels. Let me know what you find."

After running the probe over Grant's head he closed the tricorder and said with surprise, "They are about as low as I've ever seen them. That is very odd."

"Another hunch. Okay, doctor, return to your post." Once the doctor had left, "Pok, he's reading my thoughts."

"That's a little farfetched, isn't it?" said the first officer.

"Not at all, because I'm reading his. I knew he was going to turn to port also."

"You mean like you're talking to each other?"

"No, more like I get a tactical map forming in my head and he can sense it. I'm doing the same with him."

"Can you really be sure enough about that to justify making decisions with that information?"

"Pretty confident, Pok. Remember the incident on the Perry? He came out of the blue just like he knew what I was going to do. The fact is, it was my plan and I had the best formed tactical map in my head. He read that and reacted to it. He's doing the same thing now. But so am I now. He knew what he was saying when he said I don't catch on too quickly."

"Okay, so how do we counter an enemy that knows what our captain is thinking?"

"By putting the first officer in command."

"Sir?"

"Lt. Commander Pokotelo, you have the bridge. Make one more pass on the Orion. Be sure to turn to port, and concentrate on that number two shield again."

"Aye, aye, sir. Where will you be?"

"I'm going down to auxiliary control. After you have made this pass, you are on your own."

"Aye, aye, sir."

**[Bridge, Orion DW3 Ronin]**

Again four phaser 1's hit the Orion destroyer's number two shield, and again the Orion destroyer responded with three phaser 1's and two phaser 2's of its own.

Sss'lorn turned to his captain. "The reinforcement abssorbed the majority of the ssstrike. He hit the port ssshield again. If he keepsss thissss up, we'll punch through hissss ssshieldsss firssst."

"I think you can count on it for the next little while."

"We will sssee."

**[Auxiliary Control, Federation DDG+ USS Athabaskan]**

"Bridge, auxiliary control. Okay, Pok, I'm all set up in auxiliary control. Keep the tactical updates coming to my screen, but I don't want to know what you're doing. I'll keep an open link to you. I'll tell you what he's going to do, and you counter it."

"Are you sure you don't want to know what I'm doing?"

"If I do then he'll get a sense of our plan. No,

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## My Brother the Orion continued

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shut down your comm link to me, Pok. If you really need me, you can override it.”

“Aye, aye, sir. Pokotelo out.”

**[Bridge, Orion DW3 Ronin]**

“He’ssss coming around for another passsss.”

“Same as before, Sss’lorn. Number two shield.”

“Yesss sssi... He changed direction!”

Joseph Grant had noticed it too. “What? ESG! Range two. Fire phasers!”

**[Auxiliary control, Federation DDG+ USS Athabaskan]**

“He’s bringing up the ESG. Range two, Pok!”

**[Bridge, Federation DDG+ USS Athabaskan]**

“Tractor! Range three. Prepare to launch drones. Get the scatter pack ready.”

“Tractor got him, sir!”

“Increase power. Don’t let him go! Fire photons and phasers!”

**[Bridge, Orion DW3 Ronin]**

As Joseph Grant picked himself up, he yelled, “Damage report!”

“ESG is off line. Three phasers gone. 50% warp and 50% impulse. Both batteries are gone. Both tractors are off line”

“Fire all phasers!”

The lights dimmed as two phasers fired.

**[Bridge, Federation DDG+ USS Athabaskan]**

“The ESG is down, sir. His last shot took out our front shield.”

“Launch drones.”

**[Bridge, Orion DW3 Ronin]**

“Incoming drones!”

“Fire phaser 3’s.”

“One drone destroyed.”

“Brace for impact.”

Bodies flew as the drone hit.

“Damage report!” yelled Joseph.

“Looksss like we’re pretty well ssstripped,” said Sss’lorn with disgust. “Impulssse is gone, warp iss at 25 percccent, and we’re down to one phassser. Looksss like he learnsss quicker than you gave him credit for.”

**[Bridge, Federation DDG+ USS Athabaskan]**

“Looks like they’ve had it!” said Pokotelo as the cheers died down. “Pokotelo to the Captain. I think it’s safe to come up now.”

“On my way.”

A few minutes later Grant emerged from the turbolift. “Report.”

“I think the Orion has had it, sir.”

“Now if only he hadn’t disabled our comm system. Bridge to Major Jordan, I don’t know if it’s safe, but we may have to board the Orion. Stand by.”

“Aye, aye, sir,” came the voice from the speaker.

“Sir! We’ve got trouble. Sensors picking up a cloaked WarEagle at 450,000 kilometers. Bearing 310 mark 2.”

“Drop the tractor. Joe’s not going anywhere soon. Helm, speed 20, 310 mark 2. Tactical, charge photons and phasers. Prepare a weasel.”

“Incoming transmission from the WarEagle, sir.”

“Federation starship. This is the RIS Council Guard. The Orion vessel that you have engaged is

a fugitive from the Romulan Empire. Stand down from your assault. We intend to board her. Respond.”

“We can’t respond, and nobody but me is taking my brother anywhere. Overload photons.”

“Aye, aye, sir.”

“Range?”

“300,000 kilometers.”

“Let me know when we are fully charged, then increase speed to 29. Range?”

“210,000 kilometers.”

From tactical, Lt. Commander Pokotelo said, “Photons almost charged, sir. He’s de-cloaking.”

“Range?”

“120,000 kilometers.”

“Helm. Full stop.”

Hesitantly, “Full stop sir.”

Pokotelo looked around surprised.

“WarEagle is firing its plasma.”

“Fire phasers and then launch the weasel.”

The lights dimmed as the phasers fired.

“Almost penetrated their front shield, sir.”

“Ready on photons. Helm, prepare a 180 degree HET.”

“Plasma is going for the weasel, sir. It just passed us.”

“When the WarEagle passes us execute the HET and fire.”

“Aye, aye, sir.”

The WarEagle passed almost directly overhead, firing phasers as it went. As soon as it passed, the stars blurred as the ship changed its orientation. Then the photons fired.

“Direct hit, sir. Their number four shield is down. Massive internals on the WarEagle, sir. I think we got their torpedo launcher. The plasma is coming back for us, sir!”

“Launch drones.”

Shortly thereafter the two drones detonated on the WarEagles’ number three shield. Simultaneously the Romulan plasma R hit the front shield of the Athabaskan.

As bridge crew picked themselves up, Pokotelo reported, “They turned a fresh shield sir, but we did some more internals. Their power has dropped enough that I don’t think they’ll cloak any time soon.”

“How do we look, Mister Pokotelo?”

“We are fairly badly hurt, sir. We can’t take another R-torpedo hit.”

“Helm, best speed to the weasel. We may be needing that again.”

**[Bridge, Romulan WER+ RIS Council Guard]**

“Helm, take us on a sweeping turn around the Orion. Engineering, get working on the plasma launcher. I want it operational now!” Tribune Braak was furious.

“Sir, what about the Orion?”

“He’s not going anywhere, and that Federation destroyer won’t be either. Execute my orders. Engineering, give me a status report.”

“Shields three and four are gone, sir, and the front shield is at 10%. Warp power is at 35%, impulse is 33% and 1 battery left. Plasma launcher is being repaired. Expect it to be operational in three minutes. Two phaser 1’s and one phaser 3 operational.”

“Concentrate shield repairs on the front shield. I want it restored before we approach the Federation destroyer.”

“Yes, Tribune.”

**[Bridge, Orion DW3 Ronin]**

“Engineering, how are those repairs coming on the engines?”

“Ssslowly. We have ressstored 12 percent more warp power.” As an after thought Sss’lorn added, “Sssir.”

“Helm, plot a course away from this action, fast as you can.”

**[Bridge, Federation DDG+ USS Athabaskan]**

“Looks like the Orion is leaving.” Pokotelo noted.

“That’s alright. We have a bigger problem right now. Joe is not a concern. That WarEagle is coming around for another pass. Are you sure we got their torpedo launcher?”

“Yes, sir. I don’t think it will take long to get on line again though.”

“Status report.”

“We are at 60% warp power, 50% impulse, 50% APR’s, and 1 battery left. One photon destroyed and four phaser 1’s inoperable. Both drone launchers are off line. Shuttle bay is operational. We still have the scatter pack available. We haven’t readied the weasel yet though. Any impact by an R-torp will cripple us completely.”

“Prepare to launch that scatter pack on my command.”

**[Bridge, Romulan WER+ RIS Council Guard]**

“Helm, plot a course to take us over the Orion. We’re going to leave them a present.”

“Yes, Tribune.”

**[Bridge, Orion DW3 Ronin]**

“Romulans coming this way, sir.”

“Prepare to fire on my order.”

“Sir. the Athabaskan has launched a shuttle. It’s blossoming sir. Scatter pack.”

“Who is it tracking?”

“Looks like the Romulan, sir.”

**[Bridge, Romulan WER+ RIS Council Guard]**

“Drones incoming, sir.”

“Turn to port. Prepare to fire on my order. Set the tractors for point defense. Keep the number two shield to those drones.”

“Yes, Tribune.”

“Range?”

“40,000 kilometers.” A few seconds later, “The tractors grabbed two at 20,000 kilometers.”

“Fire phasers!” shouted Braak.

The ship rocked as a drone hit the shield.

“Number two shield is holding, barely. Only one drone got through. Still holding two in tractors.”

“Destroy those when the phasers recycle. Maintain course to the Orion.”

“Yes, Tribune.”

**[Bridge, Federation DDG+ USS Athabaskan]**

“Why is he heading for the Orion?” asked Pokotelo.

“Probably going to board them.” Grant said.

“Lot’s of luck there.” returned Pokotelo.

**[Bridge, Orion DW3 Ronin]**

“The Romulan has changed course back to us,

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## My Brother the Orion continued

(Continued from page 17)

si... He's launching his torpedo at us, sir."

"Ready all phasers. Range?"

"30,000 kilometers!"

"Fire at 10,000 kilometers. Now!"

**[Bridge, Federation DDG+ USS Athabaskan]**

"He fired a torpedo at them, sir."

"It can't be real, but Joe can't take that chance. He's too badly damaged."

"You're right, sir. He just fired all his phasers. Impact!" Then, "You were right, a pseudo torpedo."

**[Bridge, Romulan WER+ RIS Council Guard]**

"Prepare to drop the nuclear mine when we pass them."

"Yes, Tribune."

**[Bridge, Orion DW3 Ronin]**

"Prepare to repel boarders!" Joesph Grant ordered.

"Why didn't he fire his real plasmass?" said Sss'lorn.

"Because he wants us intact. We will see about that," said Joe slowly.

As he looked up, he could clearly see the WarEagle closing his position on the screen. He looked down at the command console on his chair. His hand flipped up a small pad on the chair arm. Below was a large red button, perhaps two centimeters in diameter. His hand reached for the button, but then Sss'lorn spoke, and his hand stopped in mid movement. Looking up, Sss'lorn was holding a phaser on him.

"If you are thinking of sacrificing us for your

brother, think again," said Sss'lorn.

"What you don't understand, Sss'lorn, is that my argument with my brother was for me to resolve. I will not be interfered with from an interloper. You people will never be as important to me as my brother is."

"I will not hesstitate to kill you, Grant."

As Sss'lorn spoke, Joe looked down and started to reach for the button again. His body vibrated from the impact of what was apparently a phaser blast to the left shoulder.

"NO! JOE!"

"Shut up, Jim!" he said.

The WarEagle was passing them. He looked up one last time and could sense his hand touching the button. Suddenly his body was engulfed by intense searing heat.

**[Bridge, Federation DDG+ USS Athabaskan]**

The entire bridge crew stood dumbfounded. The Orion destroyer exploded in a massive blaze. The damage through the WarEagle's weak rear shield had released the tractors holding the two remaining drones, which in turn went through what remained of their number two shield. The resulting injury proved too much for the WarEagle, and it too exploded in a fireball.

Turning around, Pokotelo noticed that Captain Grant had slumped to the deck. "Sir! Doctor to the bridge!" as he ran toward him.

When the doctor arrived, Grant was being supported, with help, against his command chair. He was staring at the screen, at the funeral pyre that was his brother.

Through a parched throat he croaked, "Hel... Helm. Set course for Starbase 12. Maximum warp."

**[Admiral Hudson's Office, Commanding Officer, Starbase 12]**

"Admiral. There are some people from security here to see you."

After a short pause, "Send them in, Janice."

As the three security guards entered the room, the Admiral remained seated. "Yes, gentlemen, what can I do for you?"

"Admiral. By order of the Federation Council, you are under arrest for treason. You will please follow us, sir."

"I see. Well, there really is only one answer to this."

Before anyone could move, Admiral Hudson fired the phaser that was sitting out of sight below his desk. His body quickly faded into nothingness.

**[Officers' Quarters, Starbase 12]**

Grant sat in front of the communications terminal, his features sunken, his eyes hollow. As he stared at the form taking shape on the screen, he brightened briefly as he recognized his sister.

"Jimmy! How great to hear..." Her voice trailed off as she noticed the tear running down his cheek. "Jimmy, what's wrong?"

"Hello, Janelle." Turning away from her image he said, "Is mom home? I have some... news for her."

### In the next issue of Hailing Frequencies

Next issue we return to the halls of Taldren and see if we can pry forth any more secrets about SFC2.

They drive ships that look like packing crates, turn like stuck merry-go-round, take damage like a tank and can blast you to pieces from any side. The Gorn, love them or hate them, you have to admit you know little about them.

In Issue 4 of Hailing Frequencies E.L. Crisler decides that the time has come to lift the veil on the Gorn. This is not an official work, but it has more information than any source has yet provided.

Dennis Greene returns with part 2 of his Weapons Breakdown. This time he looks at the heavy weapons systems.

Dale Schofield brings us part one of his Romulan saga, The Wraith of Taprek.

Tactical Tidbits returns next issue with a look at Maneuvering Tactics and the featured Ship will be the Federation CA.

This is just a taste of what is to come next month. Until then,

Hailing Frequencies Closed

### Hailing Frequencies Staff

These folks work hard to bring you each issue of Hailing Frequencies.

**E.L. Crisler**

Co-Owner, Managing Editor,  
Gorn Race Editor, Print Layout

**Dennis Greene**

Co-Owner, Executive Editor, Thesis Editor, HTML Design

**Salvatore Grasso**

Federation Race Editor

**Dale Schofield**

Romulan Race Editor

**Nicholas Cioran**

Tactical Tidbits Editor

Hailing Frequencies still has a few staff positions open. If you are interested please submit an example of your writing style, some personal info and your favorite SFC race.