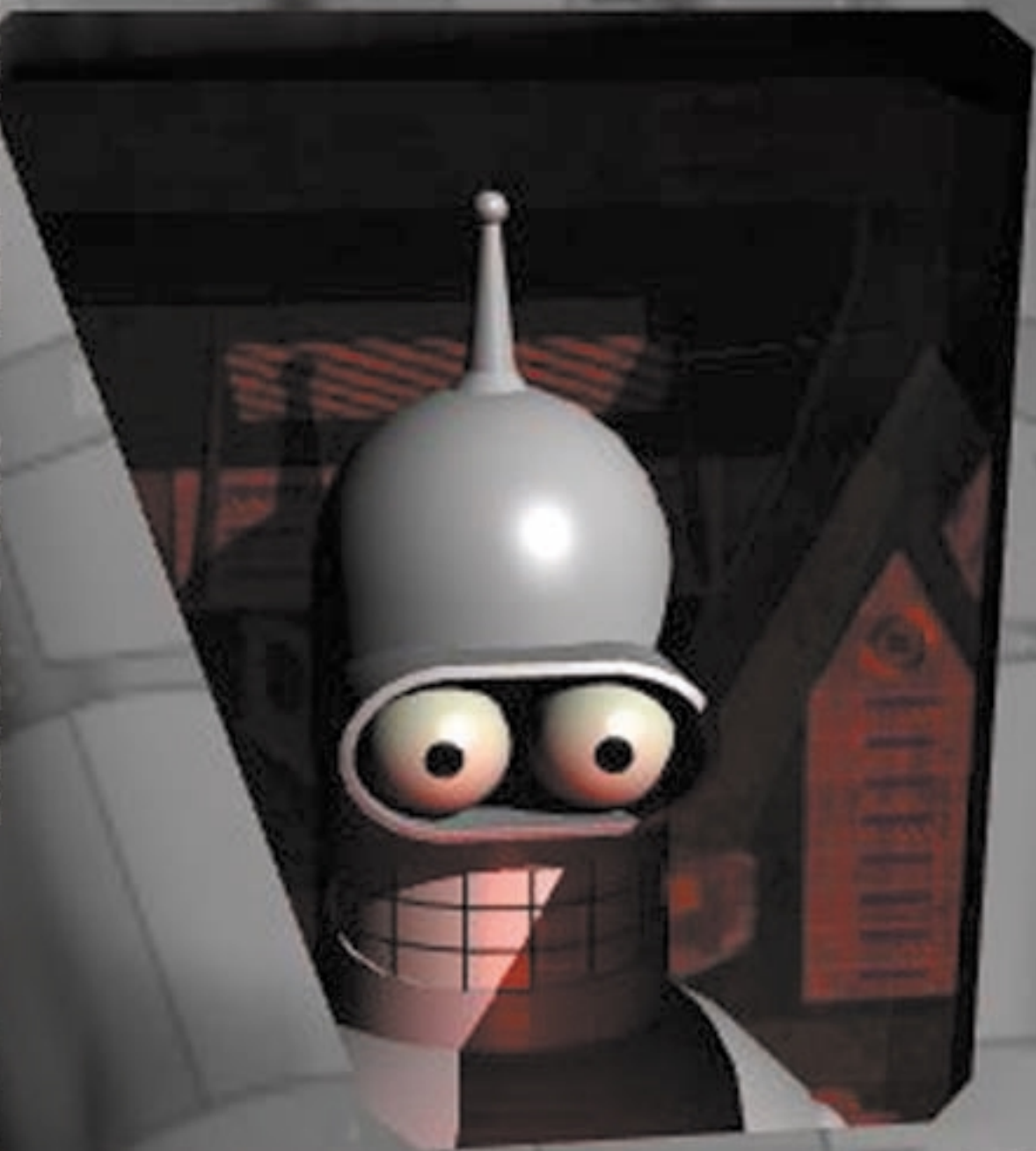


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What?

ALTERNATE REALITIES

APRIL
2002

Issue No. 12

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SCI-FI OVERLOOKS RANGERS SERIES

Legends pass in to myth, and things that should not be forgotten are lost...



THE SCI-FI CHANNEL has announced its line-up of new-season premiere series and TV specials.

Legends of the Rangers is not among them.

JMS had this to say about the absence of his proposed series in the lineup:

"The SciFi Channel has indicated that it's moving away from space shows, with all the hardware/alien stuff that goes with it.

"So it looks like Rangers isn't going to go ahead. They haven't said it directly, but networks never do."

Talk in some arenas remains optimistic. But the same can be said about the Crusade optimists. After all, they say, the series of B5 was taken up after more than a year after its lackluster pilot was screened.

But that was in an era where sci-fi shows were scarce. Now the competition is quite comprehensive. Stargate. Farscape. Enterprise. Andromeda. And a host of other projects "in the works".

The Sci-Fi Channel announced a number of new mini-series and telemovies, some of which will be "back-door pilots" in the style of the B5LR telemovie. Included in the line up is the Steven Spielberg series Taken (in which B5LR cast member Enid-Raye Adams appears).

Another winner was a recent loser: Battlestar Galactica. Fox recently dropped the series - only weeks before filming was due to start - after it poached the director to "repair" its second X-men movie.

It seems the already built props, sets and CGI models proved too tempting a bargain for Sci-Fi.

"Regarding Battlestar Galactica...you have to remember that this is something that had been originally in development for one of the networks and went down," JMS says in a usenet post.

"Lots of development money had been spent by the studio, down to building sets. And SciFi is owned by

Universal/USA Studios, which also owns Battlestar Galactica. Waste not, want not...."

Conversely, the chances for the success (financial and fan-based) of Legends of the Rangers was somewhat hindered by the loss by Warner Brothers of all the computer-generated models for the show. This would have represented a huge re-investment of time and money to restore the "look and feel" of the Babylon 5 universe.

And Rangers was criticised in many areas as being "too similar" to Enterprise. Such criticism is not new for B5. But it has always in the past proven such comments to be wrong.

The SciFi Channel continues to re-run the B5 and Crusade series - and they continue to rate well, despite the number of times the episodes have been repeated. SciFi invested a lot of time and money in to promoting the telemovie, - much more than is usually the case. But a poor selection of screening times - which pitched the pilot against a major US sporting event - did not help the show gain the minimum required average ratings to be regarded a success. But this cannot be the one and only excuse. The pilot did not perform terribly well on its re-runs, either.

The successful new mini-series, weekly series and "resurrected" series include: The Amber Chronicles, The Forever War, Firestarter Rekindled, Myst, On the Seventh Day, Taken, Tripping the Rift, X-Files pickup, Stargate SG-1

JMS sounded unsurprised with the outcome, and does not offer much hope for further B5 stories:

"(It was) the five year Babylon 5 story that I set out to tell in the first place," JMS says.

"I said it before: that was my main goal going into this, to get B5 on the air and tell that story. Everything else is lagniappe."

What's in a name? Will Galactica be Galaxy Quest?

THE SCI FI Channel will 're-imagine' the classic 1970s Battlestar Galactica series in which "a rag, tag fugitive fleet" of the last remnants of mankind searches for a new home.

Just what does "re-imagine" mean?

JMS himself is involved in the "re-imagining" of the famous French comic book, Jeremiah. This means the TV show shares a few names and a vaguely similar setting - but nothing else.

The four-hour mini-series, billed as an "intriguing twist", will now be written by Ronald D. Moore (Roswell, Mission Impossible II). He also co-authored "First Contact" and many "Star Trek: The Next Generation" and "Deep Space Nine" episodes - though they omitted these "Trek" credits from the press release.

Moore declared he isn't doing a sequel, but instead is re-imagining the concept from the beginning. "I'm going to go back and retell the origin story. There will certainly be changes. I'm trying to just take a different approach to the material. I want to keep the underlying myth of the show, which is what makes people remember it, and update a lot of it."

Assuming "origin" is not a typo for "original",

this could mean the miniseries will be a telling of the original exodus from Kobol - not the Colonies.

"I've been wanting for a while to go in a different direction with film science fiction, and we're doing it with 'Galactica.' We're going to try to make it, for want of a better word, more real, a real place, down and dirty, with a sort of 'You are there' feel to it," Moore said. "It's going to be -- and this is a bad phrase -- a 'down to Earth' sort of place. It's going to be more about the people aboard the Galactica and the ragtag, fugitive fleet than it will be about aliens of the week, planets of the week or anything like that."

Sci-Fi Channel is opting for a new production team - ignoring those who last year struggled in vain to get the show off the ground with the Fox network. Breck Eisner (Steven Spielberg's Taken; The Invisible Man) will direct. "X-Men" producer - and driving force behind this incarnation of the Battlestar revival - Tom DeSanto is not involved in the mini version.

"This news came as a shock to Tom as well as to the rest of us, and appears to have come out of nowhere," said Chris Feehan, co-president of the

Battlestar Galactica Fan Club.

What they chose to make

Press Release: SCI FI Slate Announced
The SCI FI Channel announced that it is developing an ambitious slate of original miniseries and movies, including several backdoor pilots for possible series. Anchored by its upcoming 20-hour epic miniseries Taken, from DreamWorks Television and Steven Spielberg, SCI FI said it will air four major movie or miniseries events a year, starting in 2003. A list of miniseries and movies follows.

•**Battlestar Galactica.** This four-hour miniseries re-imagines the classic '70s SF TV series. Ronald D. Moore (Roswell) wrote the script, with Breck Eisner (Taken) attached to direct. Distributed by USA Cable Entertainment, the project will be executive produced by David Eick.

•**Myst.** The four-hour miniseries is inspired by the best-selling video game and uncovers an ancient civilization that existed for thousands of years beneath the surface of the Earth--a civilization that created magical books allowing one to travel to other worlds. A Mandalay Television Pictures production for SCI FI, Myst is executive

produced by Elizabeth Stephen with Rand Miller and Susan Bonds of Cyan, in association with Columbia Tri Star Domestic Television.

•**The Forever War.** Based on Joe Haldeman's Hugo and Nebula-award-winning classic novel, this four-hour miniseries is an epic love story that spans a thousand-year war. The miniseries will be executive produced by Oscar-winning visual effects supervisor Richard Edlund (Star Wars), with Peter Sussman and Ed Gernon executive producing for Alliance Atlantis. John Fasano (Alien 3) wrote the script.

•**The Chronicles of Amber.** Based on Roger Zelazny's best-selling 10-volume series, this four-hour miniseries tells the story of a royal family with amazing powers over time and space, which is plagued by in-fighting as it tries to unite against a sinister enemy. Richard Christian Matheson will write the screenplay. Tom Patricia of Patriarch Pictures will serve as executive producer.

From JMS: the B5 eulogy?

"HAVE I grown tired of B5? Is it an albatross around my neck? No, not at all.

In 18 years of writing and, later, producing television, I have worked on a dozen series and written well over 200 produced episodes of TV (not counting 8 TV movies). They include such high-visibility shows as the Twilight Zone, Murder She Wrote, Walker Texas

Ranger and others.

But for me, Babylon 5 always stands a head higher than the rest of them, because of the sheer amount of work, commitment and time that went into it, and the overall quality that resulted. Sometimes I look back at it all and I'm just astonished that we were actually able to pull off something of that magnitude.

Sure, it was uneven in places, often breathtakingly so, but no one in American TV had ever even tried to pull off something on that scale, it had never been done before, so we were inventing the form as we went along. And the show has persevered. From the time it went on, it has been running continuously, year after year, on one network or another, for about eight years now. It's still running in over 120 countries around the world, including the most recent addition, Japan, which started showing B5 about a month ago and where it is rapidly becoming a hit with SF fans there all over again. Every few days there's a new wave of email from people just discovering the show for the first time.

I'm unspeakably proud of what we did with that series...

I'm going on at length here about this only because it's important to me to make the distinction above. When you think Rod Serling, who did a lot of shows, you think "creator of The Twilight Zone"...when you think Roddenberry, who did a lot of shows, you think "creator of Star Trek." Each was the high-water mark of their career.

I've done a lot of shows, but when the game is finally called on account of darkness, the obit will read "...creator of Babylon 5."

And I won't mind a bit."

- jms



Unholy Alliance

The Treaty of Balos, the jaded peace

WHEN discussing the second Dilgar War reference must be made to the primary cause of it, the unsatisfactory stalemate that followed the 4 month long battle of Mitoc, which led to the treaty of Bestine.

Much has been made of the possible outcome of the war if Admiral Hamoto was given free rein to conduct the war, and did not fight the battles dictated to him by the EA senate. Whether this would have changed the result of the war cannot be known. But the joint EA and Markab fleets were ground down at the battle of Mitoc, as while both sides poured ships into the battle, the Ch'lonas launched an invasion of Ross 128, forcing the diversion of some EA reserve fleets. Unfortunately, the Dilgar managed to slip a fleet across the EA border, where it raided a number of systems, and caused the senate to demand protection for the EA colonies and even Earth, in case of a Dilgar attack. While this attack never came, it resulted in enough of the EA navy being tied down protecting industrial and civilian targets that the attack on Mitoc failed. Both navies had been decimated, and neither side could capitalize on the weakness of the other. The EA was vulnerable to invasion by the Narn, and was fighting an invasion by the Ch'lonas, and the Dilgar had realized they could not drive further towards the rim. So delegations met at Bestine and negotiated a treaty that carved up the League. The Dilgar kept what they had con-

A Brief History of the Second Dilgar War by Anla'Shok James Taylor for the Anla'Shok Archive.

By Ben Rubery

quered, on the condition the remaining Alacan, Krish and Mitoc populations were evacuated to friendly worlds (the Balosians refused and dug in even further). The League homeworlds that were unconquered had the blockades around them lifted, and free flow of trade was to be allowed on certain routes through what was now Dilgar space. The Descari and Cascor became a buffer between the rimward League races and the Dilgar. While the races surrounded by the Dilgar were unhappy, the alternative was extermination. The treaty provided that if any of their homeworlds were invaded then the EA and Markab would enter a state of war with the Dilgar Imperium.

This treaty was a deep blow to the Alliance, and caused a rift between the Humans and the Markab, who, while they signed it, regarded it as giving in to evil. The Alliance simply didn't have the military power to force the Dilgar back.

Following this, the Dilgar signed a treaty with the Narn providing that if either party were

attacked the other would come to their aid. The Narn did this to attach themselves to the newest major power, and find themselves possible co-belligerents in a war against the Centauri.

This situation set the scene for the second war. The Dilgar used the intervening years to move their population from Omelos to Mitoc and Alaca, and created a number of colonies, most notable of which were Tirrith, Roth and Comac, which together with Balos and Alaca, formed the core of the Dilgar industrial base. While the Markab industrial base was within striking distance of the Dilgar, and several important and lightly defended EA and Centauri colonies were within striking distance of the Dilgar and Narn, the EA could not move against the Dilgar. The Dilgar could strike almost at will deep into Markab and EA space, and this threat was both a reason for signing the Bestine treaty, and a cause of tension between the Imperium and Earth Alliance.

The truth points to itself

As the years passed several important events occurred. The remaining League races rimward of the Dilgar formed the Southern Defense Alliance, and began operating joint fleets and cross training personnel. The Minbari made contact with the Earth Alliance. The Grey Council voted to make contact with the EA after the Rangers gave them reports of a new dark power emerging and crushing many of the League.

WHAT IF? DILGAR IMPERIUM

As Dukhat had secret meetings with the Vorlons it has been theorized that this was at least partly at the urgings of the Vorlons. The most notable event of the meeting was the discovery by the Minbari of their link to the Humans, as a young pilot, Jeffrey Sinclair, had been attached to the diplomatic delegation as part of the honor guard. He accidentally came into close proximity to the Triluminary while escorting Human delegates. The response it gave when in proximity to Sinclair caused immediate debate among the Grey Council. Lenonn, head of the Rangers, invited Sinclair to join immediately, and the Humans, eager for close ties with a powerful new ally, consented.

This began a tight alliance between the Minbari and the Earth Alliance. The Rangers were rejuvenated and became a joint Human and Minbari force, properly equipped and funded by the two governments. The Warrior Caste withdrew their objections on the condition that the Rangers did not deploy capital warships and their function remained primarily intelligence gathering. The EA and Minbari jointly developed Molecular Pulsar technology, and installed it on a new light scout ship deployed exclusively by the Rangers. These ships became a common sight in the remains of League space, monitoring Dilgar activity and fighting raiders sponsored by the Dilgar that preyed on the League. The Minbari and EA became politically closer, to the point where it was considered that the Grey Council be expanded to 18 members with Human representatives making up half.

Initially this was muted, as the EA senate knew that none of their members would pass the tests required to become a member of the council. The Minbari knew that some Humans were more than capable of becoming council members, though Anla'Shok Sinclair was busy being groomed to take on leadership of the Rangers and extremely busy, and so it was deemed easier to wait. Captain Neroon, one of the Warrior Caste's younger and more progressive members, had been assigned to co-ordinate the Warrior Caste and Ranger activities. He and Sinclair became firm friends, competitive in the extreme, hoping to better each other and excel in the eyes of their superiors.

The Centauri Republic under Emperor Turhan began to realize the possible threats they faced from a Narn/Dilgar alliance against them. The appearance of Dilgar weapons on Narn ships (Bolters and Pulsars, and later Pulse Cannons) gave the Centauri great concern. The officer exchange program operated by both races and the depopulation of Quadrant 27 by a mysterious plague gave Turhan and Prime Minister Malachi cause for greater worry. It was obvious that the Dilgar and Narn were looking to the decaying Republic as a potential conquest. A large fleet refit and reactivation program began as secretly as possible, hoping not to spark off an early attack. The defences in all Centauri border systems were upgraded, in preparation for a coming invasion.

With all the races in known space preparing for war, there was a certain gentle momentum to it. The question was where the conflict would flare up.

The Death of Lions

Flare up it did, when in 2244 the Narn fleet, with some supporting Dilgar ships, simultaneously attacked Quadrants 1, 17, 27, and 32, Jux Prime, Ragghesh and Beta 3. Some of these attacks were feints designed to tie down the Centauri fleet, but ground invasions of Ragghesh and Quadrant 1 followed preliminary mass driver bombardments. Soon the Centauri border fleets were falling back to secondary defence positions, and the joint Dilgar/Narn fleet was advancing into Centauri space, the only race that had not signed a mutual protection treaty with some of their neighbors.

This had made them the first target for the Dilgar and Narn. Centauri confidence in their own abilities had damned them. The Centauri were rolled back, and appealed to other races to intervene on their side. The EA and Minbari were unsure as to what to do. The Minbari had given the EA artificial gravity technology and the first ships designed with this improved tech were still in the prototype stage. The EA were reluctant to start a war that they knew would involve them doing the bulk of the fighting along the border they shared with the Narn and Dilgar. While the Narn advanced, Ranger vessels escorted Centauri refugee convoys and defended them against Dilgar and Narn attacks, allowing the evacuation of several million Centauri to Sh'Lekk'Tha. But within a month the Dilgar and Narn forces were in a position to assault Centauri Prime.

The EA and Minbari were faced with a choice. Allow the Centauri Republic to fall and buy a few months preparation for war, condemning a race to extermination and severing the one link to the coreward League races that did not go through Dilgar/Narn space, or intervene. The Grey Council and EA senate chose to attack the Narn border, striking Drashu and Kotok with a joint force of Ranger, Minbari and EA ships. When Narn resistance in these systems was eliminated, the joint task forces stood ready to attack the Narn Homeworld. The Narn had to pull ships back, as the implicit threat was that whatever was done to the Centauri homeworld would be visited on the Narn homeworld in return. A ceasefire was declared, but the Narn held on to the territory they had captured. It was a lull in the fighting, a pause before the main offensive. The Minbari/EA began fortifying their border with the Narn, and annexed Quadrant 15 to

create a support base for possible operations in Centauri space, and to deny a forward base to the Dilgar and Narn should they mount attacks into Minbari space.

Prelude and Beginning

Unknown to the EA and Minbari the Dilgar had negotiated Descari neutrality and passage through their space in the coming conflict. It was obvious the Dilgar could crush the Descari at will, and they made a deal to save themselves.

In the spring of 2245 the Dilgar made their move. A short two months of peace was followed by several unexpected moves on the part of the Dilgar. One was the movement through Descari and Markab space of a large fleet. This was possible by Descari neutrality and the active defence of only a tiny fraction of the Markab fleet. The reason for this did not become obvious until later, as the Drofa plague was striking down the Markab race. The Dilgar had eliminated one of the races that opposed them in one fell swoop, using a genetically engineered strain of the Drofa plague. The Dilgar even salvaged a large number of intact Markab warships and turned them against the EA. With Altair falling to one swift strike, Narn forces took Batain, Marigol and Entat, reducing the Centauri to just eight systems and cutting any link between the EA and coreward League. Dilgar forces fighting the EA diverged, raiding Ceti and Tau Ceti, and attacking Orion. The Dilgar did not wish to commit ground troops to take Orion, and bombarded the planet with mass drivers and viral plagues from orbit, scouring it clean of Human life. The Dilgar then moved on Sirius as the Narn annexed Mentab and Sh'Lassan and then attacked Epsilon and Eridani. The Minbari and EA formed a fleet at Sirius, and despite some of the new Dilgar weapons designed specifically to fight the Minbari, the Dilgar were stopped. However a Dilgar suicide frigate seeded the atmosphere of Sirius with Stafford's Plague, and hundreds of thousands died, even with the partial immunity given by inoculations against the known strains of Stafford's.

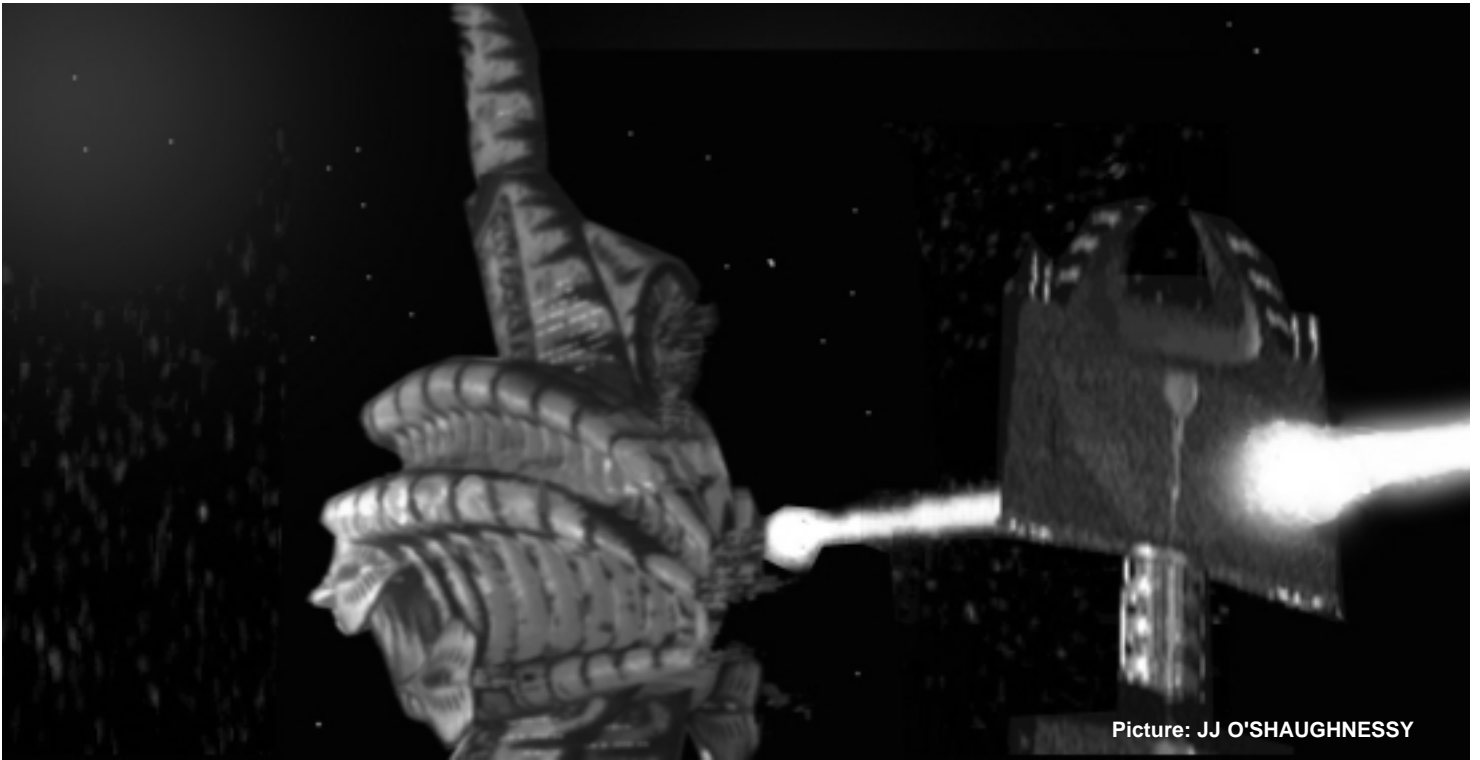
Stalemate

The EA first had to stop the Dilgar advance. A joint EA and Minbari fleet fought a large Dilgar force at Sirius, as the Dilgar probed the route to Sol. The Rangers found themselves fighting numerous Dilgar raiders who tried to bring EA shipping to its knees. The Minbari crushed Narn fleets in Centauri space, liberating Batain. However the Narn had managed to insinuate a plague among the refugees in Sh'Lekk'Tha, which claimed many of the Centauri in that system and crossed the species gap to infect the Minbari, causing the Rangers to blockade the system to prevent the spread of the disease.

The Warrior Caste reacted angrily, throwing a fleet at Kotok, where it was lured into a nuclear minefield by the Narn, then finished off by wave attacks from Narn and Dilgar fighters. This was the first military loss by the Minbari in centuries.

While the Minbari had a far greater level of military technology, a decade of preparation for this war had swelled the Dilgar fleet, as had their

WHAT IF? DILGAR IMPERIUM



Picture: JJ O'SHAUGHNESSY

alliance with the Narn. The EA warships were still inferior to the Dilgar, but their fighter technology had achieved parity. This was leading towards a stalemate. The Minbari could not drive the Dilgar and Narn back to their homeworlds without taking unacceptable losses.

Since the last Alliance attack, Kotok and Drashu had been heavily fortified, and the Dilgar had used their initial experiences against the Minbari to formulate a number of tactics and weapons to counter their stealth technology. The Narn energy mines had proved effective against Minbari ships, relying on blanketing the area that the ship was in rather than locking on to the point it occupied, and the Dilgar had deployed their own version of the mine, along with specialized anti-Minbari cruisers to deploy it.

And so an initial stalemate was created. The Centauri could not evict the Narn, the EA were fighting the Dilgar at Altair and the Narn at Epsilon, the Minbari fought both at Coutor and Beta 2, and the lines stayed static for a few weeks while the EA Chiefs of Staff and Warrior Caste planned a counter offensive, moving reserves and newly produced ships to the front, hunting down raiders to free warships from convoy duty, and making contact with the League using the Rangers. Efforts were made to find a cure for the plague afflicting Sh'Lekk'Tha, but the virus was complex and genetically engineered to mutate rapidly, making vaccinations or a cure hard to develop.

Interregnum

While the EA and Minbari were preparing, the Narn conquered Alpha 2, Rogoth and Tolonius, annexed Ildra, and drove the Drazi from Zagros. The Drazi had been about to enter the war, and the Dilgar and Narn decided to strike first, bringing the Hurr in on the side of the

Drazi. Mofaka came under Dilgar attack and fell within five days, and the Narn started to probe Zhabar. The Hurr were quickly pinned down defending Androma, and the Drazi were hemmed in around Zhabar as Deskatalos, Hephtharg and Shambah fell.

The Dilgar had used the lull to eliminate a threat to their industrial heartlands, and were redeploying the vast majority of their fleet to fight the EA and Minbari when the counterattack began.

Earth Ascendant

The joint EA and Minbari fleets forced the Dilgar and Narn from EA space within days. The enemy had been unprepared for the ferocity and size of the attacking forces, or the deployment of the new EA advanced cruisers. Mentab and Sh'Lassan, which had been buffer worlds, were freed from Narn occupation, and probes were made on Dilgar holdings at Coriana and N'Chak'Fah.

The Vree entered the war, with a contribution made to the fleet by the Torota and Kor-Lyan, and moved into former Markab space, fighting the Dilgar there, and destroying many of the captured Markab bases that were used by the Dilgar. The Dilgar retaliated, and a stalemate formed in what became a sideline to the main conflict along the EA border. The Dilgar simply couldn't deploy enough ships to defeat the Vree in this theatre, and simply deployed sufficient ships to keep the Vree from making gains and threatening their flank. However, the Grey Council authorized Anla'Shok Sinclair and Captain Neroon's plan to take the Narn out of the war, and they were dispatched with a task force of Minbari ships and Ranger vessels to carry out a surprise campaign in the Narn rear areas. The fleet took the risky jump route from Sh'Lassan to

Quadrant 14, and within a matter of hours all Narn forces in the system had been destroyed. The fleet moved on to Quadrant 24, then Quadrant 37, eliminating Narn forces. They then moved to T'llin, and destroyed the forces occupying the planet, freeing the T'llin from occupation. The Rangers then distributed EA built weaponry to the T'llin resistance, and promised support and recognition to the T'llin people. The fleet then repeated this with the Corillani, creating problems for the Narn in their backwater areas and eroding their empire. This was a cause of great concern to the Kha'Ri, and forces were diverted to deal with these rebellions.

The Minbari and EA exploited the redeployment to strike at Kotok and pushed the Narn out of the system. With their homeworld threatened and their subject races in open rebellion, the doves among the Kha'Ri began to put forward moves for peace in meetings with the Optimists. The Centauri were on the brink of total defeat, but the Regime was being whittled down from the inside. Minbari ships struck Gorash, Beta 3, Coutor, destroying the Narn forces in these systems and freeing the Centauri worlds. Soon the supply lines between the Narn Regime and its forces in captured Centauri systems were broken, and the remaining Centauri forces moved out and took Immolan back, stripping Bentat and Ettata of defences to provide the ships. The Dilgar were tied down fighting the EA, Minbari and raids by the Rangers and Warrior caste in their territory. Coriana fell to the EA, and the Dilgar base at N'Chak'Fah was destroyed.

The Fall of the Regime

The pressure on the Regime mounted. The forces that had been massed to take the Centauri homeworld were bled away to try to stave off rebellions and enemy operations in Narn space.

WHAT IF? DILGAR IMPERIUM

The Narn fleet was being picked off by superior Minbari forces in Centauri space, and the Dilgar were bogged down fighting the Vree and EA, and being forced to divert their forces from the Centauri front to defend Dilgar holdings. The Regime was being bled to death, just managing to fight a defensive war after they invaded the Centauri, tied down defending captured territory that they couldn't hold from the Minbari fleet. The Narn Regime came apart at the seams. They sought a separate peace and withdrew from the conflict in the summer of 2245.

The races occupied by the Narn were freed, and the Narn withdrew forces from Drazi and Centauri space. The mission of the fleet under Neroon and Sinclair had been an enormous success. Routes were reopened between the Alliance and Drazi, and supplies and ships started to flow to the Drazi front, quickly restoring the Drazi to the borders they had at the start of the conflict. The Dilgar withdrew to their own borders, and dug in. They hoped that if they could make any attack difficult enough, the EA and Minbari would seek a peace settlement. The Grey Council, Anla'Shok and Chiefs of Staff met to decide the next step, forming a council of war.

Endgame

The Alliance council of war was presented with a difficult situation. They needed to end the continuing Dilgar menace, rather than contain it, or they would be fighting another war a few years down the line. Dukhat argued that the League needed to be resurrected and restored to their borders after the war, that the Dilgar should be confined to their new homeworld of Mitoc and denied space going craft, and that the systems jump gate and beacon should be coded to prevent activation by craft inside the system. To maroon the Dilgar on their stolen world, trapping them there to prevent them threatening the galaxy again. The problem was how to achieve this goal. Warleader Branmer suggested an attack from Drazi space, taking the original Drazi territory back and crippling the Dilgar industry at Alaca, Balos and Tirrith. Another suggestion was an attack through former Brakiri space, to link up with Hyach forces and cut the Dilgar Imperium in half. It was decided that this plan was preferable, and a fleet was assembled at Epsilon Indi to take Gamma 7 and then move on to Brakos. However, it was agreed that to deceive the Dilgar an assault would be mounted on Latig and Fendamar, in order to tie down Dilgar forces and threaten their shipyards.

Warleader Branmer was placed in command of the diversionary force, Captain Shakiri, Branmer's deputy, and General Williams were in charge of the main thrust. Anla'Shok Sinclair and Captain Neroon were given forces to raid the Dilgar supply lines. Sinclair was promoted to Entil'Zha, and Captain Neroon was given indicators by Branmer that he would be promoted to the office Shakiri held when Branmer retired after the war. The Vorlons were watching both of

them carefully, mindful of Sinclair's role in the conflict with the Shadows.

In the autumn of 2255 the diversionary operation began, with Drazi, Hurr, Centauri and Minbari forces taking Latig in the face of stiff Dilgar resistance. At the same time the raiding operations began, designed to slowly exhaust and grind down the Dilgar forces. Often a system would be raided several times in a space of hours, and then left as soon as reserves were allocated, and another system attacked. The Dilgar reserves were kept moving, kept from fortifying their positions and were even attacked once while in hyperspace by Ranger vessels.

Slowly the Dilgar were forced out of Drazi space, their supply lines hounded. It was obvious that they could not militarily stand up to the Minbari, EA, Centauri and Vree at the same time. And they decided to withdraw from Drazi space, shortening their lines, falling back on stronger fixed defences. They abandoned what they could not hold, challenging their enemies to attack their well defended core systems.

What they did not expect was the push from EA territory to bisect the Imperium. The Allied fleet took Gamma 7, Brakos, Comac and Krish within the space of two weeks. Krish was virtually undefended, Brakos had a minimal Dilgar monitoring force to prevent Brakiri military vessels from leaving the system, and Gamma 7 and Comac were assignment backwaters for personnel. The taking of Shra-bal and Yonog was harder, as the fleet was having to defend systems it had taken, and Dilgar counter attacks at Gamma 7 and Krish resulted in bitter battles with tens of thousands of lives lost, but when the Alliance linked with the Hyach and Abbai, both of which had maintained powerful navies to prevent Dilgar invasions, the resulting fleet took Utriel and Tirolus in short order.

The Dilgar Imperium had been split in half. The new Dilgar homeworld was isolated from its major ship building centers, and the Alliance fleets were preparing to destroy the center of Dilgar production. The Rangers moved through Omelos, Rohric, Innata and Wahant and destroyed all Dilgar military and production facilities in the systems. Slowly the Dilgar were being militarily castrated, cut off from their production and support facilities. The Drazi, Abbai, Centauri and Hurr fell on Alaca, wearing down the defences over a period of two weeks, and eventually driving the Dilgar out of the system. With ships pouring in from across the League and known space the Dilgar were facing annihilation in the pocket of Balos, Tirrith and Roth. A massive fleet was assembled by the Dilgar to blunt the Alliance advances. The Rangers learned of this and reported it to Dukhat. Unknown to most, but later reported in Deleenn's biography of Dukhat, Dukhat passed the information to the Vorlons, who took steps to assure the elimination of the Dilgar armada as it passed through hyperspace. The Vorlons could not afford to allow war to bleed the Minbari and EA dry with the next Shadow war so close at hand.

They even avoided military action, using their knowledge of hyperspace to create a pocket around the fleet, and the Dilgar were trapped for eternity in it. If the Dilgar had won, or remained a significant power, they would be natural allies of the Shadows. So the Vorlons felt a little interference was justified. The Dilgar had lost the war from this point onwards. The systems of Balos, Tirrith and Roth fell one after another. The Descari, Cascor and Ipsha joined the alliance, attacking nearby Dilgar targets and taking back territory lost in the previous war.

It was the beginning of the end for the Dilgar. The Dilgar were reduced to their new homeworld, Mitoc, and surrounded by enemies. And without their industrial machine to support them, as the resources that had been developed were paltry compared to those available to the Alliance. The second largest fleet ever assembled massed to attack Mitoc. In a battle epic in nature, and filled with deeds heroic and terrible, the Dilgar were defeated by the massed navies of the League and three of the major powers. The terror was over and the Dilgar confined to their homeworld.

Aftermath

The Dilgar were limited to their homeworld, and the Minbari and Earth Alliance grew politically closer. The Grey Council created a subordinate advisory council consisting of 3 representatives of each Caste, nine Humans and three Rangers. The Babylon Project was begun to unite the League and major powers, the rehabilitation of the Narn was begun, and the Centauri and Narn reconciled their differences.

The Shadows had a hard time finding potential allies, only finding friendly receptions with the Lumati, Grome, Dilgar, Ch'lonas, Deneth and Thrakallan. None of these races were in the position to act as pawns, and the Army of Light routed the Shadows in the war, as the Minbari and Earth Alliance united with an increasingly joint military. Armed with molecular weaponry and equipped with gravitic drives was one of the most fearsome military machines the galaxy had known. The Shadows slept again, hoping for a more favorable galaxy when they next woke. Sinclair realized his fate as Valen, and the knowledge of his destiny became a keystone uniting the Humans and Minbari. The Human-Minbari federation has become the largest power block in the known galaxy, and has recently been joined by the Cascor, Balosian, Hyach and Abbai, and a new era of peace has been ushered in. The late Warleader Branmer's "Life of a poet and soldier" and Admiral Hamoto's "The origins of the Dilgar conflicts" provide far more detailed records of the Dilgar conflict, and far more detail of the individuals involved.

* * *

DILGAR SHIP UPGRADES



Shipyard Supervisor

By BEN RUBERY

AFTER the conquest by the Dilgar of a large stretch of space, they hit upon the problem of holding it. The large fleet they had constructed was sufficient to hold the territory they had, but there was always the threat of League forces trying to break out, conquest by outside powers, the possibility of war with the Earth Alliance or Centauri and the possibility of unforeseen enemies arising. The Dilgar knew how hated they were, and prepared accordingly for the possibility of war. After the movement of their population, they embarked on a program of weapon development and ship refits. The Dilgar created Pulse Cannons and the Quint Pulsar, the apex of Pulse weaponry, using this rather than the Heavy Pulse Cannon (however they shared its blueprints with the Narn). They improved the fire control on their Bolter weapons. Before the second phase of the war, they developed the Pulse Mine to counteract the Minbari Jammer, which it did to a limited extent.

NEW DILGAR WEAPONS

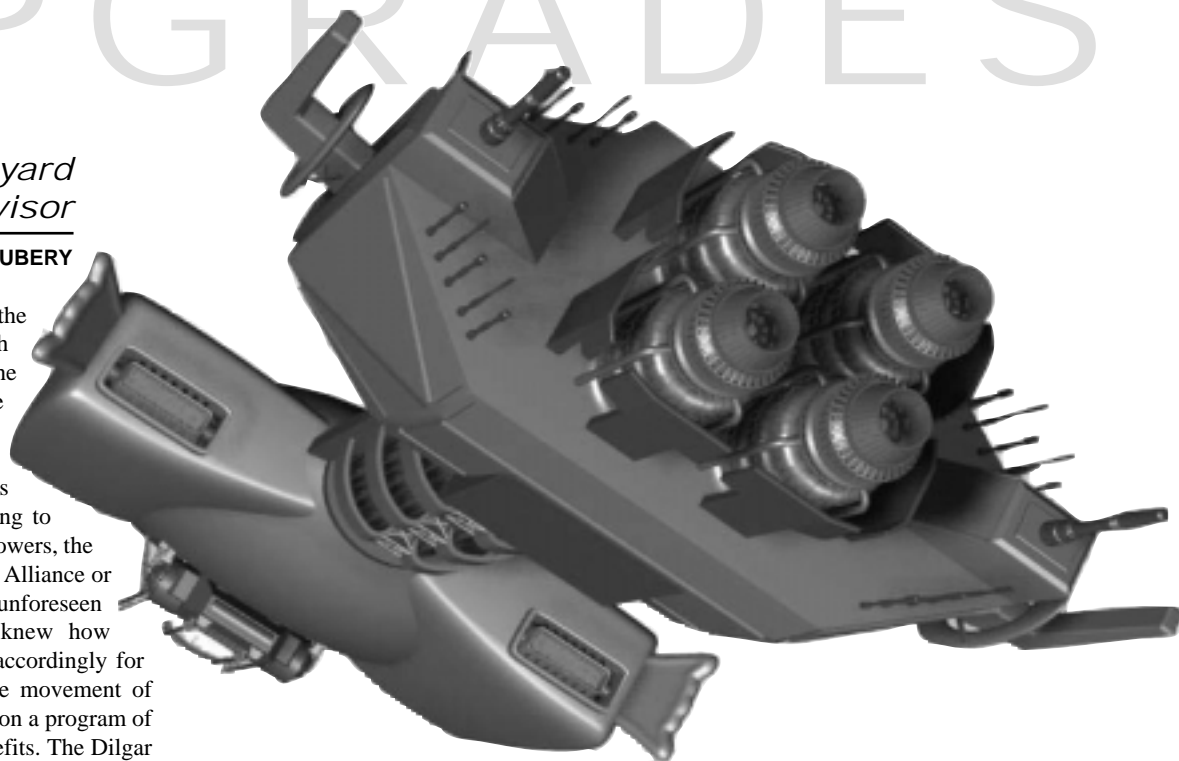
Quint Pulsar: A simple improvement on the Quad Pulsar, retaining its long range but increasing the accuracy and number of pulses. The Dilgar preferred this to the Heavy Pulse Cannon, as it was accurate the same ranges as the heavy bolter.

Dilgar Pulse Mine: This variation of the Energy Mine exchanges area of effect and damage for the ability to fire three smaller mines. The Dilgar used this weapon to blanket areas, trying to hit Minbari ships and fighters. However, it is more reliable than the Energy Mine, as it isn't given to fizzling out or scattering off target. It fires a spread of three mines every two turns, and the Dilgar player simply picks target hexes and secretly notes them, revealing the target hexes after movement.

DILGAR SHIPS

Targath Improved Strike Cruiser

After the war, the Targath went through a series of refits that resulted in this ship, the Improved



Targath. With an armament of Quint Pulsars, Pulse Cannons, improved Bolters and R-class missile racks, this vessel combines long and short ranged firepower with an increase in survivability by the reinforcement of the forward and side sections of the ship, and a large increase in the amount of armor on the hull. Carrying 24 fighters as the original version did, this ship was more than a match for its Centauri, Narn and EA equivalents, and a pair of them with their accompanying fighters is enough to equal a Sharlin cruiser.

Ochlavita I Improved Destroyer

Taking the advances incorporated into the Ochlavita leader and the post war technology improvements, the Ochlavita I Destroyer was created. With its Quint Pulsars and R rack, the destroyer packs a long range punch and is quite adequate to serve in the Dilgar gunline. With the addition of a flight of fighters in an underslung bay, the Ochlavita retains its value in the Dilgar fleet.

Tratharti M mine gunship

The Tratharti was the hull chosen for production of a series of dedicated Pulse Mine cruisers, designed to pelt Minbari warships with mines and circumvent the effects of their stealth technology. These cruisers carry six forward launchers able to launch 18 Pulse Mines, which explode affecting a small area.

Jashakar I Improved Frigate

This upgrade of the Jashakar incorporates the Dilgar advances in propulsion technology, and the new pulse weaponry, to improve the Jashakar and make it a better all round frigate, capable of engaging fighters and ships with equal facility. This upgrade replaced many of the standard Jashakar variants in use during the war. All standard, pulsar and escort Jashakars were converted to this design.

Thorun IV Dartfighter

The latest in the Thorun series, designed to be able to engage and defeat any fighter in the League or the EA. With 4 missile rails and a large and powerful engine, the Thorun IV was quite capable of engaging any fighter in service, with the exception of the Nial or Tishat, and coming out on top.

Malkur Heavy Bomber

This radical alteration to the Thorun frame provided the Dilgar with a powerful ballistic missile fighter. With only one non-ballistic weapon, the design required escorting, but with a standard crew complement of two and the ability to carry a dozen missiles, the handicaps were overlooked. In combat these craft proved particularly vulnerable to Star Fury and Warrior Caste Nial pilots pulling one two attacks, taking down the escorting Thoruns and then the bombers.



Picture: JJ O'SHAUGHNESSY

The Babylon Paradox

By ALEX KETLE

CONSIDER for a moment, the problems created by the theft of Babylon 4, taken to fight in the last Shadow war 1000 years before B5. It is a theft that creates a kind of temporal paradox in itself.

Without the theft, there would have most likely not been a Babylon project 1000 years later, with no Babylon project there is no Babylon 4 station to steal, the cycle feeds itself. For Babylon 4 to even exist, it must have existed 1000 years before, and to exist it must have been built...thus you see one half of the wheel, but what happens when you look at the other side, when B4 never existed, so couldn't be stolen.

Without the help of B4 the last Shadow war would have been a stalemate, with the Shadows coming out of it much more powerful and in a much better position for the next war a thousand years later. Also, with no B4, there would have been no Valen. The loss of Valen would have been a much more serious blow to the history of the Minbari as they would never have been reformed into the 3 castes and would have been without the Grey council.

Now we can look at the possible progression of the Minbari. Lacking the direction of Valen, it would seem inevitable that given the oppressive nature of the Warrior Caste as seen on the show that they would begin to move into the dominant positions of the government. With no Grey Council to spread the power the Warrior Caste would begin to take over and a more closed minded and paranoid position adopted. Assuming that the Minbari become more isolated, they may not take an interest in the younger races. As they grow apart from the younger races the Vorlons would begin to look elsewhere for races to ally with for the coming war, a war that

WHAT IF? NO BABYLON 4

the Vorlons would now be more fearful of losing since the last one ended in a stalemate.

Now we jump ahead to the more recent era, the Dilgar war. Assuming the Shadows came out of the last war stronger, they would have no need to wait as long, and may start contacting potential agents far sooner. Seeing the potential of the Dilgar, it is easy to see the Shadows approaching them at the beginning of their grand crusade and offering their services. Imagine the Dilgar are curbed and instead of taking on the universe move out and after taking out several of the closest non-aligned races fortify their holdings, turning the Dilgar into a major player with a significant amount of territory. With the Shadows moving more strongly, and the Minbari turning in on themselves, the Vorlons would be forced to turn to another race to act for them- the Humans. With the halt of the Dilgar war, the Earth Alliance would not be needed to step in. With no war to make them cocky, and the Minbari becoming isolationist and militaristic, it becomes easy to see the Earth-Minbari war never taking place, leaving a stronger EA, but one without the influence garnered from the Dilgar war. With no Minbari war there was never a need for a Babylon station, thus Babylon 4 was never built, was never stolen, and the circle is completed with the last Shadow war.

Under the influence of the Vorlons, we could now see the EA developing their technology along different lines. With their advancing tech and operating under the Vorlon philosophy, the EA moves out attempting to forge the various

minor nations into an alliance.

Assuming the Narn and Centauri continue to take out their aggressions on each other, they could also have turned out very different. With the Shadows focusing on the Dilgar, they would not have had the influence over the Centauri to start the second Narn-Centauri war. Instead the Emperor's peace initiative moves forward and the Narn and Centauri begin to form a stronger alliance with each other, an alliance that the EA and Vorlons would back.

Meanwhile with the warlike Minbari, after a thousand years of rule by the Warrior Caste, the most warlike Clans are approached and fall under the influence of Shadow agents. Without the prophecies of Valen and the direct influence of the Vorlons, the Minbari are easily convinced in their paranoid state that the formation of the Alliance between three of the strongest of the younger races is a direct threat to them, and so they would enter the war on the side of the Shadows.

Now in the time of the next great Shadow war, we see a much stronger force of Shadows, with their allies the Dilgar and Minbari, along with (most likely) the Drazi and perhaps one or two other smaller league worlds.

Against them in the Army of Light would stand the forces of the Vorlons, Narn, Centauri, and a more powerful Earth Alliance, armed with Vorlon enhanced weapons.

Now we see advanced Dilgar ships, possibly enhanced with Shadow technology, going head to head with advanced EA ships, enhanced with Vorlon technology.

The possibilities become endless for the various technology changes and scenarios.

What do you *really* want?

A Fleet Action Scenario
By ALEX ROBERTS

1241. A shrouded figure walks out of a black, slippery looking ship onto a landing pad. He looks up at the buildings around him. Enormous crystalline structures tower around him. Excellent, he thinks. A powerful race. The perfect tool to bring chaos to the galaxy. His quick, powerful strides take him rapidly into the one of the largest and most beautiful structures. He is late for a meeting with the Grey Council. And he knows what they want...

Overview:

Before the last great war, many races were

approached by the Shadows, with offers of power, wealth, and more. Though the specifics shall never be known, the Minbari Grey Council was made an offer they couldn't refuse, and fell into the camp of the Shadows. Equipped with Shadow technology, and assisted by the Shadows great cruisers, the Minbari brought chaos to the galaxy.

The Vorlons, aided by their servants, many of whom were exterminated to the man, fought back against the tides of chaos, and fought the Shadows, and their Minbari (amongst others) servants to a standstill. As with all of their conflicts over the past eons, the Shadows returned to their hibernation, and the rest of the galaxy picked up the pieces.

It is now 2260. The Shadows are awakening from their sleep, and beginning to stretch out their barbed limbs to once again bring chaos to the Galaxy. The Minbari, isolationistic since their vicious war with the Earth Alliance 15 years prior, listen to the Shadow's emissaries with open ears, and prepare their great machines and vessels of war. Chaos will again flood the known universe, and the Minbari would once again be all the stronger for it!

New Vessels: During the last great war,

the Minbari benefited greatly from their association with the Shadows. Numerous phasing and molecular weapons were given as gifts by their Shadow contacts, and fitted to Minbari ships. Though many were destroyed in the last war, the awakening of the Shadows has allowed the Minbari to once again begin to receive shipments of weaponry from their patrons. Minbari shipyards toil overtime to refit ships in anticipation of the next great war.

Shadow Sharlin: The greatest Minbari cruisers are swiftly being herded into the yards in order to refit them with more advanced Shadow weaponry. Replacing the Neutron Lasers with specialized Molecular Slicers turns these fearsome ships into deadly slayers. Unfortunately, the lack of power on the ships compared to Shadow cruisers limits the strength and rate of fire of these new weapons.

Shadow Neshatan: One of the Minbari's newest designs, it was inspired by the Earth Alliance's Novas during the Earth Minbari War. Equipped with vast power reserves, these ships made excellent installation points for energy hungry Shadow weaponry. Stripped of their Fusion Cannons, these vessels still struggled to power their new weaponry fits.

Shadow Tinashi: Tinashis were a major hull in use during the last great war. Although they have steadily been upgraded over the years, a

Picture:
JJ O'SHAUGHNESSY

small number of these Tinashis remain from the last war, with their Shadow weaponry remaining. Well hidden within Minbari space, these vessels are slowly slipping from mothballed yards, ready for war in a new millennium.

Shadow Star: The Shadow Star is the newest of the Minbari's ship designs. Small and fast moving, these ships are deadly when fitted with advanced Shadow Weaponry.

SCENARIO: TESTING THE WATERS

Overview: The Centauri Republic has recently joined with the forces of the League under the aegis of Babylon 5 and Captain Sheridan in their Army of Light against the Shadows and their servants. Unnerved by Drakh raids on League and Centauri border planets, the Centauri government under their new Emperor Mollari has signed on and pledged their fleets in service against the Shadows and their servants. At the urging of their Shadow handlers, the Minbari have readied their fleets for war. The time has come. The Centauri dogs will fall before the might of the Minbari Shadow fleet!

Minbari Briefing: Your fleet is to be the initial strike force in your incursion into Centauri space. Conquest is not your goal. Simply destruction and chaos. Help to teach the Centauri the error of their ways in joining with the Vorlons and their puppet Sheridan.

As the main strike force, your fleet has

WHAT IF? SHADOW MINBARI

large numbers of your race's small selection of Shadow enhanced vessels. Use them well to strike fear in the hearts of the Centauri defenders.

Centauri Briefing: Your people learned long ago to leave the Minbari and their space alone. Reconnaissance missions into Minbari space in the past have led only to broken ships and slaughtered crews. Now, however, the Minbari have cast aside their isolation. A large Minbari fleet has just crossed the border into Centauri space. Your fleet is to delay them while reinforcements are called up.

Map: Use 2 standard maps. The Centauri and Minbari forces set up on opposite sides of the maps. The field is fixed.

Minbari Fleet:

Flag Squadron: Shadow Sharlin (Nials), 2 Shadow Tinashis, 1 Letann

Attack Squadron A: S h a d o w Neshatan, 2 Shadow Tinashis

Attack Squadron B: 4 Shadow Stars

Attack Squadron C: 3 Shadow Sharlins (Nials)

Centauri Fleet:

Flag Squadron: 1 Octurion (Sentris), 2 Primus (Sentris), 1 Maximus, 1 Covran

Squadron A : 4 Vorchans

Squadron B : 4 Vorchans

Squadron C : 2 Centurions, 2 Altarians (Sentris)

Reinforcements (These arrive on the Centauri's set up side at the beginning of turn 4. They may start at any speed, but are placed no more than 3 hexes in from the edge. They make their full turn 4 as normal)

Reinforcement A: 4 Darkners

Reinforcement B: 4 Demos

Reinforcement C: 1 Balvarix (Rutarians and Sentris), 3 Mograths.

Reinforcement D: 3 Primus (Sentris), 2 Mograttis

Victory Conditions: Whichever side holds the board without any enemy ships wins the game.



A Fleet Action Scenario

By ALEX ROBERTS

DELAL slumped in his chair, lightly rubbing his bony crest. The war was not going well, and the latest news did little to improve the Minbari's disposition. The war with the Humans had begun 5 years ago, amidst an air of righteous fury. Their leader Dukhat had been killed in an unprovoked and underhanded attack by this upstart race. Minbari honor demanded their extinction! They thought the war would be over quickly. The Humans were weak. Only recently into space, their ships were no match for the Minbari's sleek and powerful Sharlins and Tinashis.

No one had counted on the Human's ingenuity. Barely 2 months into the war, the Humans had found a counter to their Jammers, a feat no other race could boast of. It was almost unthinkable. Compounding their new vulnerability, relations between the Warrior caste and the Worker caste frayed until they broke. No longer willing to be dictated to, the Worker caste had begun an outright rebellion against the Warrior caste. Ships undergoing maintenance were sabotaged. New construction ceased overnight. Brutal suppressions and public executions did little to move those of the Worker caste. Tens of thousands died at the hands of the Warriors.

Despite their troubles, the Warrior and Religious Castes continued their war against the Humans. Dukhat's death demanded it. The going was not easy though. Despite their advanced firepower, the Human's extensive use of atomic weaponry and prodigious production schedule, coupled with the breaking of the Minbari's main protection, their Jammers, the advancing tides of Minbari ships were slowly brought to a halt.

Outside the Cooke system, a numerically superior Human fleet ambushed the main Minbari strike fleet. Blasted by atomics fitted to ballistic weapons and hidden in a nearby asteroid field, and swarmed by thousands of fighters, the Minbari spearhead was decimated. The initiative had passed to the Humans.

Slowly, the Minbari were pushed back. Unable to increase production due to the intransigence of the Worker caste, the Warrior caste fought back with unparalleled savagery. The entire colony on Khandi was cleansed before the Minbari pulled out of the system. Similar scorched earth policies were enacted on other Human territories. Still the ever-growing Human fleets pushed on.

Four years after the first shots were fired, the first Earth Alliance ship crossed into Minbari territory. Nocalo and Pagati were soon to fall, despite the desperate efforts of their Minbari defenders. Still the Worker caste did nothing. Word began to filter out that some in the Worker caste viewed defeat and subservience to the Humans as preferable to their mistreatment at the hands of the Warrior caste. Delal shook his head. How could this happen? How could their mighty race have fallen so far? Perhaps it was Valen's will. The structure he himself had set up had been forsaken amidst petty squabbles by his Minbari brethren. Perhaps they deserved this, thought Delal.

Delal peered up at the holographic screen in front of him. Displayed was a representation of the Minbar system. Small blue ships represented what remained of Delal's fleet. Off to the right, Delal looked again at the news he had feared for weeks. 2 large groupings of ships showed the Earth Alliance fleet. Some of the ships were the newest designs the Humans had to field. Very well, though Delal. Once more into the breach. They would hold the line, and none would pass.

Earth Alliance Briefing: The year is 2251. This war with the Minbari, begun as a war of aggression by these filthy bone headed aliens, is coming to a close. Their visible and outright hostility against the Prometheus started this war, but you are damn sure going to finish it. 5 years of bloody fighting have preceded this moment, but the end is finally near. Your grand fleet has made their way to the bonehead's homeworld. It's time to finish this.

Continued Page15

THE YEARS IN HELL

- 2046 First Centauri war
- 2113 The Centauri invade the Narn
- 2126 Formation of the BA
- 2130 Formation of the EA
- 2155 The Centauri discover Earth
- 2169 The Koulani attack
- 2170 The Ch'lonas attack
- 2172-2175 Skirmishes between EA and Centauri
- 2209 The Narn win their freedom from the Centauri
- 2209 The start of the End project.
- 2212 Human civil war (Mars rebellion)
- 2219 EA vs. Narn war
- 2220 The Narn retreat from Corillani
- 2228-2232 Dilgar invasion
- 2230 The closure of the EA border due to the Dilgar war, the formation of the IML.
- 2239 Formation of the TFS
- 2239 Formation of the Federation
- 2239 The Babylon Project.
- 2241 The return of the Dilgar: They ask for a seat at the council
- 2241 Joining of the IML and TFS into a single group, war with Dilgar
- 2242-2244 Plot and treachery from the Dilgar (preparation for the Human-Minbari encounter. An ongoing series of local battles for territorial possession
- 2245 The Human-Minbari war lasts 11 months
- 2246 The "Battle of the Line" with the Dilgar
- 2246 The Minbari devastate the Dilgar for their very stupid move
- 2248-2253 Tension period
- 2253 The destruction of Babylon 3 (terrorist attack by unknown group)
- 2254 The Narn withdraw from the revolting colonies (Tachunq, Tillin) formation of local government
- 2254 The disappearance of Babylon 4
- 2258 Babylon 5 is online (Sinclair is put to the tri-luminary device by Delenn)
- 2259 The Markab are infected by the Drafa plague 33% of the Markab population die before a cure is found, the Markab turn into a zealot religious state (ed. note: jihad anyone?)
- 2259 The Narn Centauri war of retribution, ending in a stalemate

The End Project: Descent into a shadowy hell

By **RENAUD GAGNE**

* The Belt Alliance is an autonomous group with a few colonies discovered and built by the BA.2159-2228

* The Dilgar invasion was a quest for a new home so the scorched planet policy was not implemented. The Dilgar tried to enslave the Alacan, Mitoc, Krish to have new homeworlds and a strong industrial and agricultural resource base, but the liberation force frees them and defeats the Dilgar. Toward the end, the Dilgar high command pulled all its forces back to defend Omelos. After the battle of Omelos, the liberation fleet assembles an extremely large OSAT ring to prevent any ship approaching or leaving the planet. They also shut down the jumpgate but leave the beacon so routine patrols could check on the defeated Dilgar.

* The Alacan, Mitoc, Krish and the Balosians form the Federation of Freed Planets. (2239)

* In 2239 the Earth government announces the creation of the Babylon project to prevent a new war. The Babylon stations 1, 2, and 3 were upgrades of the Orion starbase, from 2239-2242.

* In 2241 a Mishakur dreadnought exited the jump gate at Babylon three, requesting a seat at the council -the Dilgar were back. Every nation was eager to prevent another war so they agreed.

* Later they realized that the Dilgar were able to reprogram the OSAT ring to defend their world. They had also sent a large fleet to the rim at the last stage of the war to ensure one day they would have revenge.

* The tension on the council was high with the newest member. The Dilgar always warned the EA that one day they would have their revenge.

* In 2244 the Centauri warn the Humans not to go toward Minbari territories. When the Dilgar learn about the EA expedition, they did all they could to beat the Humans to the border. In 2245 sept 5 a large Dilgar warfleet intercept a small

WHAT IF?

THINGS WERE DIFFERENT

Minbari convoy attacking, killing, then leaving brain-washed survivors and planted evidence that it was a Human attack. The Minbari respond with a furious attack. The war would last 11 months before the Human could prove their case.

But it was too late, more than half of the EA fleet was gone. The Minbari run some telepathic tests on the survivors seeking the truth.

When the Minbari realize that the Dilgar lured them into a war they present their apologies to the EA and go looking for the Dilgar. 2 month later the Dilgar decide to finish what the Minbari started. They jump into the Sol system, it was the battle of the line for the EA. The Minbari learn a few days before of the Dilgar plan by intercepting a reinforcement battle group. The Minbari jump in just in time to save the Humans from total extermination. For months a large Minbari battle group will remain there to defend the Humans during the rebuilding of their fleet.

2248 the Minbari ask for a seat at the Babylon 3 council

2248-58 period of tension

2259 The League and the Non-Aligned worlds break up and only the Federation remains intact.

Here are the players:

Minbari vs. Yolu/Hyach old feud dating from the first Shadow war

- Drazi-Brakiri war

The former League wars

- Narn Centauri war

- Human- Dilgar war

- The Markab religious war with the Corillani

- Commercial war of raiding between the Vree, Pak'ma'ra, Belt Alliance, Koulani and Brakiri

- Hurr-Grome war

- Abbai Dilgar war

- Centauri-Dilgar- Yolu -Lumati / the rest of the galaxy wars

- Centauri second civil war which leads to the splitting of the Centauri Republic into an empire and a democracy.

- Gaim great conquest march

* * *

SKIRMISHES



Noting a tendency towards large fleet battles, every month Babcom will present a skirmish-sized battle that can be played in the space of an afternoon. This is the first and is set during the Dilgar war.

Circle the Wagons

By BEN RUBERY

"This is Pyrotinia calling, we need urgent assistance. Dilgar squadron detected approaching refugee station XV-17 near Altair ETA, urgent assistance required."

"This is Altair control, squadron dispatched to relieve you, ETA 20 minutes."

"I don't know if we can hold out that long, Altair control."

A DILGAR raiding squadron has slipped across the EA border and is heading for a refugee processing station on the outskirts of the Altair system. Its probable intent is the destruction of the station and the refugee ships clustered around it. A small rag-tag squadron of ships has been assembled to defend the station, and a squadron of EA Hyperions has been dispatched to intercept the Dilgar. However, it is certain that the Dilgar will strike before the relief force arrives.

Players: 2-4 (it is recommended that there be only one Dilgar player, but it is entirely possible to have a refugee player, a Pyrotinia player (who also controls the defence squadron fighters) and a third player to control the MCVs). This can represent the divided command present. When the Hyperions enter, the refugee player controls them.

FORCES

Dilgar: Targath Strike Cruiser, Leskrati Jumpcruiser, 2x Ochlavita Destroyer, Jashakar Frigate, 24 Thorun II Dartfighters begin in hex row01xx in turn 1.

Refugees: Civilian Small Base in hex 3826, 2x Civilian Commercial freighter, 3x Descari Cruscar Transports, 2x Markab Mafka Transport Cruiser, 6 Delta Vs (the bases fighter complement) within 5 hexes of the base.

Defence Squadron: Pyrotinia (Artimis Command cruiser found in V4, alternatively use the Artimis in Dilgar war), Descari Croscotu Frigate, Balosian Essusu Patrol Boat, Belt Alliance Medium Gunboat, EA Laertes Police Corvette, 12 Abbai Wimuk Light Fighters, 12 Falkosi Light Fighters within 5 hexes of 3826, fighters on board carriers.

EA Squadron (arrives turn d6+3): 3x Hyperion Alpha, 18x Tiger (already launched) arrive at the bottom of the map.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

The scenario continues until all ships are destroyed or have left the field of battle, disengaging by distance or jumping out.



The players score points by satisfying the conditions given below, the player with the highest total wins.

Dilgar player:

Destroy a refugee transport - 2 points

Destroy the civilian station - 8 points

Destroy Pyrotinia - 5 points

Destroy defending MCV - 1 point

Destroy a Hyperion/Transport Cruiser - 3 points

Lose Targath - -5 points

Lose Leskrati - -12 points

Refugee player

Per refugee ship that survives the scenario - 3 points

If the base survives the scenario - 10 points

Destroy the Targath - 5 points

Destroy the Leskrati - 7 points

Notes: The battle hinges on the destruction of the civilian base (which gives the Dilgar 8 points and denies the refugee player 10) and the Leskrati (the Dilgar are almost guaranteed to lose if it is destroyed, as the raiding squadron cannot escape).

Alternatives: Replace the Pyrotinia with a Descari Scorava and the 12 Rotia and 12 Falkosis with 24 Noscors. Give the Dilgar a bonus point for balance purposes.

The Refugee player can exchange the Croscotu for a BA light gunboat if he wishes, giving himself a bonus point for balance purposes. If the Refugee player takes a standard Artimis as opposed to the command version, he gets a bonus point for balance purposes.

The Dilgar do not know how long they have to complete their task, but alternately you could have the EA reinforcements enter on turn 7, or

up to three turns earlier or later. The Dilgar get two bonus points if the EA arrive turn 6, 4 for turn 5 etc. If the EA reinforcements arrive after turn 7, the refugee player gets two points per turn they are delayed.

Historical Outcome: The Dilgar closed, the Pyrotinia launched its fighters and fired its lasers at the Targath, then retired behind the base while its weapons charged. The squadron of small vessels mounted a flanking attack while the fighters engaged in battle, overwhelming the Jashakar and damaging an Ochlavita, but lost the BA gunboat and Laertes to return fire. One of the transport cruisers was destroyed by long-range fire, but the other one closed with the Targath and devastated its forward superstructure with heavy plasma fire, before being overwhelmed and destroyed. The damaged Ochlavita was destroyed, but the other destroyer closed and obliterated one of the Descari transports as the Essusu was crippled fighting the Leskrati. As the decimated Dilgar fighters finished the last of their opposition and made towards the freighters, the Pyrotinia opened up with its lasers again against the Targath, severely damaging its sensors and engine. The Dilgar destroyed one of the base's outer sections and a commercial freighter, but lost more of their fighters to fire from the transports. As the Dilgar closed on the base and destroyed the Essusu, an EA Hyperion squadron arrived. The Dilgar began their retreat, but the Targath could not keep up and was abandoned, with the Leskrati and remaining Ochlavita escaping into hyperspace. The Targath captain refused to surrender and was destroyed.

* * *

Nightwatch: Are you with us? Or against us?

Homeguard Propaganda
By **JASON WELLS**,
with help from
ERIC LOKEN
(Neuromancer)

EVER since Mankind has been in contact with aliens they have lied, attacked us, and tried to manipulate us.

When the Centauri arrived, they told us that they had an empire that consisted of hundreds of systems, that they were the biggest power in the galaxy and no one dared to oppose them. They lied. Then since that didn't work, they said that Earth was a lost colony of Centauri, but when we got ahold of some Centauri DNA, what did we find out? They lied.

The Narns claim that they are a peaceful people. That is a lie, so far all they have done is attacked their defenseless neighbors, the only thing keeping them from trying that on us is Earth Force, if Earth Force wasn't so strong they would of attacked us too.

The Ch'lonas attacked us right after contact, so did the Koulani, both shortly after meeting us, before they knew how much we had to offer them. Border skirmishes are common, even today, it seems that every time we meet a new race they attack us, each time Earth Force has made them think twice about going further, that is until the Minbari attacked, but more on them later.

When the Dilgar invaded League space they were fragmented and squabbling in the face of the destruction of them all. Knowing that they were losing and needed a great power to help save them, they asked us for help and we gave it. Though it cost us a lot of credits, ships and most importantly men and women, we helped those we thought were our friends. In exchange they signed trade agreements and mutual-protection treaties, but was it worth us giving our young men and women for them?

When the Minbari attacked us without warning where were our "Allies"? Why didn't they lift a finger to help us? We faced what the Brakiri faced, but did they help? NO! Did the Vree or the Markab? NO, they left us to our fate. The only race that would help us was the Narns but they did it at a price, a steep price. They did



sell us weapons, but they sold them to us at such a high price that, for the same money, we could of bought several more ships to throw at the Minbari, and did those weapons work the way they were advertised?

The Minbari tried to wipe us out then changed their minds at the last minute? Why? Is it because they realized that eliminating an entire race was wrong? No, they realized that conquering Earth would be too difficult and thus set about taking over in a different way. After the war, as you well know, Earth's economy was ruined, because so much was spent on the war. After the war, what is left of our economy is being spent on rebuilding, how easy would it be for someone to come in and try to "help" us with offers of tech or money to help rebuild? If we accepted that help, or even bought it, they could use it against us in a future conflict. Far fetched you say? Well, our contacts in Earth Gov have confirmed for us that the Minbari are selling us equipment for our ships, our contact didn't know what ships will have it or what exactly it is, but chances are they will put a flaw or Trojan Horse in it to disable the ship or destroy it, can we risk that?

The Minbari claim to have honor but they do not, they used dirty tactics during the war, such as destroying helpless ships, hospital freighters and the like, but when we retaliate with the same methods they cry that we have no honor! Were their ships so powerful? Or was it that they subverted some of our people to supply them with the weaknesses of our designs. After all, many would rather be pet than dead, they are traitors to the Human race and they should be hunted down and treated before they cause more harm to Earth.

And that brings us to manipulation.

After the Centauri came in contact with us there were plenty of people who wanted to be like them, perfectly willing to throw away their Humanity to be great like them, why would Humans want to be alien? The Centauri are a decadent people well past their time as the galactic center, they lie and cheat, they are morally corrupt and they are among the most arrogant people in the galaxy. At the time, Humanity did not know this about them, all they knew was that the Centauri were great and all knowing, or seemingly so, so naturally a few felt insecure about themselves. That was a mistake, as it let all kinds of subversive alien ideas into Humanity, the full extent of the damage those misguided fools did is still not known.

The Vree have manipulated us for hundreds of years, they have visited our planet, abducted us, and experimented on humans. They acknowledge this!! Who knows what kind of programming they put in their victims and if it was transferred onto their children and grandchildren.

The Minbari are manipulating us as we speak, they are arrogant and evil, and they use technology and unregulated telepaths to get what they want. During the war, captured troops report being scanned by devices unknown to them and probed by alien telepaths. What was learned from them and what was placed in their minds against their will?

Aliens also have a worryingly big influence in the senate and control the flow of many issues. The most recent one brought to our attention is that the Minbari will only sign on for support of the proposed "best hope for peace station" if they choose the commander! What right do the Minbari, an enemy of Earth have in choosing the Commanding Officer of an EA station!! And do you think they will choose a Commander with the best intentions of Earth in mind?

That brings up one final point, we just went through a major war, our fleet is stretched to the limit, and our armed forces as a whole are being renovated top to bottom to allow them to better withstand an enemy such as the Minbari. But, it is going too slowly, colonies destroyed and families separated or killed, lives ruined, we should be rebuilding our colonies and military but what is the Senate doing? Spending millions of cred-



its on what the Senate calls "our best hope for peace" and what exactly is this hope for peace? A Space Station, that will be crewed and paid for by US, tax payers of the EA, with minimal if any support from the aliens!!!

My friends, our best hope for peace is not a space station, it is a strong Earth Force. But that is not all that is needed, we also need to keep away from aliens as much as possible, for they have shown nothing but hatred and deceit for us while hiding behind smiles and diplomacy. We need to stay away from them because every time we try to help them, we just get involved in their wars, and that costs us ships, money, and most importantly our sons, daughters, mothers, and fathers.

There are those that call us extremists and xenophobic, or hate mongers, but Homeguard is not that, we simply want to end Alien control over the government and to make sure the number one priority of the Earth Alliance Senate is EARTH and even more so HUMANITY, after all we are Humans, the Aliens are not.

Homeguard, safeguarding all of Earths Children.

HOMEGUARD HISTORY AS OF 2254.

Homeguard was founded when the Centauri first discovered Earth and a small group of people began acting, and even trying to look like Centauri in a vain effort to be what they saw as a better species. Naturally, this worried their family and friends, who formed Homeguard to help these poor confused people and to convince others of the possible dangers of alien contact, but they never committed any acts of violence. At first, efforts were small, mainly by local individuals who just wanted to keep people from inflicting harm on themselves as others had done. However, that harmless view was soon ended as extremists joined up and started pointing out that those people were the results of the first attempts by aliens to subvert the human race. Until the Dilgar war, the ratio of moderates to extremists was in

the moderate's favor, they wanted to limit Humanities involvement with the aliens, but they saw that the EA had to trade with them to survive. But just after the Dilgar war, most of the moderates left to pursue other things or because EA was on a high note with the other governments and feelings were good all around. With the moderates gone the extremists pursued an active goal of getting the EA into an isolationist state of mind, but it didn't work, things were going fine.

Then the EA disastrously encountered the Minbari. During the war, Homeguard let loose a whole string of propaganda about how the only good alien was a dead alien and how Earth was alone and where are our allies? They also organized resistance efforts on colonies conquered by the Minbari. After the war many disgruntled Earth Force members joined and they became even more extremist, arguing that the EA needs to stay put and that all alien influences should be removed from EA space.

When word reached them about the Minbari getting to choose the EA captain for the Babylon station they lost all restraint and decided to stop the project at all costs. This resulted in 3 stations being lost to sabotage. By the time Babylon 4 was being constructed, security was tight enough to prevent further sabotage.

HOMEGUARD IN B5 WARS

Homeguard is suspected of either running or sponsoring several raider groups operating in Earth space or along its borders, they are often protected by a local colony that is sympathetic to their cause. To represent them, use standard raider ships, but they are also allowed to use Nova and Tiger series Star Furies that they get from contacts in Earth Gov and Earth Force. As they are more interested in destroying alien commerce than taking prizes they prefer the more combat orientated craft. Also they do not use any alien designed craft, or double deltas.

From Page 11

Destroy the line of ships defending the planet Minbar, and, should they not surrender, level their cities from orbit.

Minbari Briefing: 5 years of destruction and sorrow. Never in a thousand years has the future looked so empty for the Minbari people. This race, these Humans, have brought your advanced and powerful culture to its knees. With the assistance of the unpatriotic and clearly tainted Worker Caste, the outcome of this war is looking bleak. Your fleet is all that remains between these Humans and the destruction of your beautiful planet. Hold the line against the darkness that seeks to envelop your homeland!

Special Rules: All Minbari squadrons automatically pass any morale checks they are required to make. Minbari Jammers have no effect on the game for any EA ships.

Map: Use 2 standard maps. The field is fixed due to the proximity of the planet.

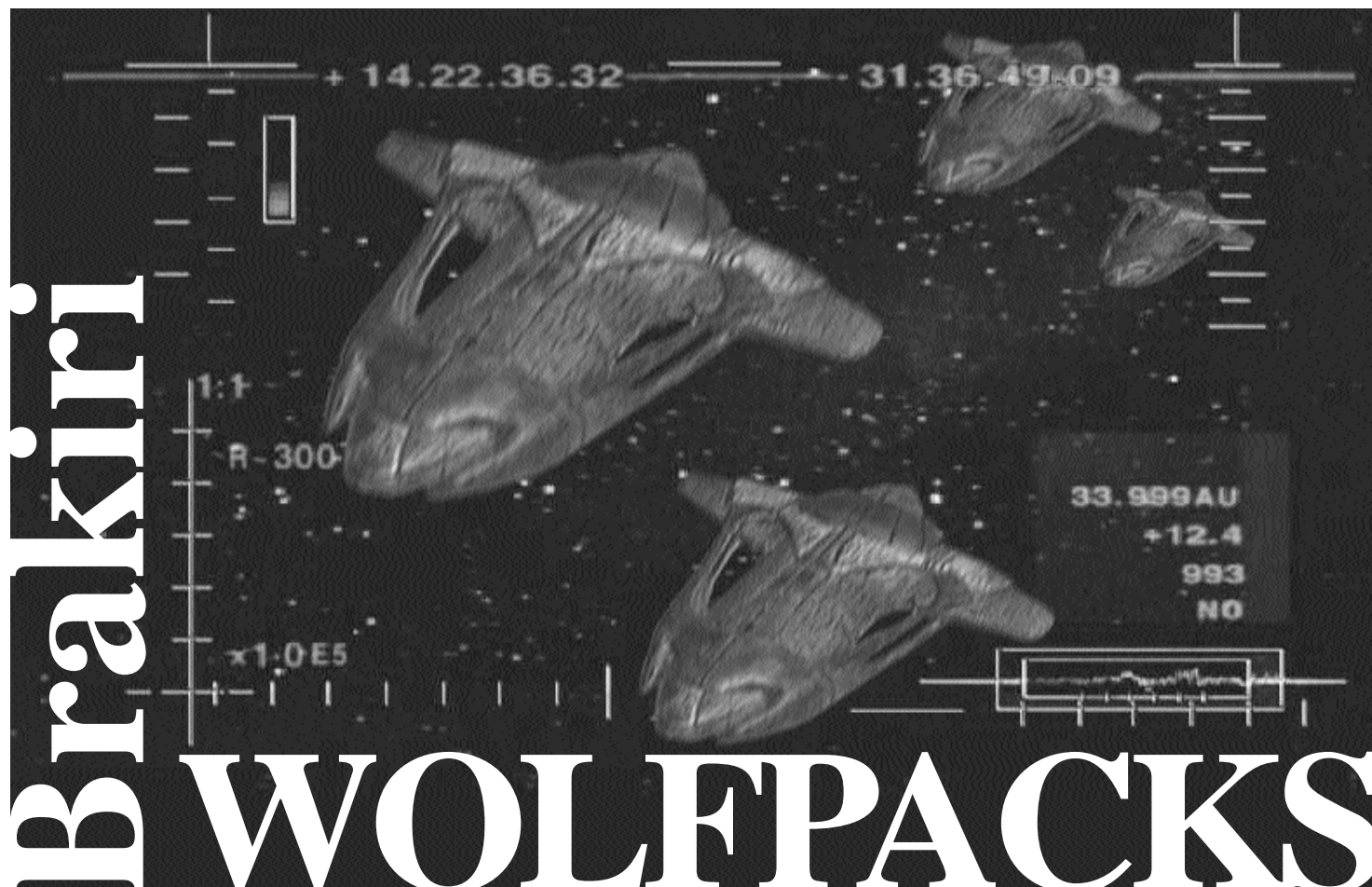
EARTH ATTACK FLEET:

- Flag Squadron:** 2 Omegas (with Starfuries), 1 Oracle
A Squadron: 1 Nova (with Starfuries), 2 Artemii
B Squadron: 1 Nova (with Starfuries), 2 Artemii
C Squadron: 1 Nova (with Starfuries), 2 Artemii
D Squadron: 2 Avengers (with Starfuries), 2 Hyperions
E Squadron: 2 Avengers (with Starfuries), 2 Hyperions
F Squadron: 3 Omegas (with Starfuries)
G Squadron: 3 Omegas (with Starfuries)
H Squadron: 3 Sagittarius
I Squadron: 1 Omega (with Starfuries), 2 Oracles

MINBARI HOME DEFENCE FLEET:

- Command Squadron:** 1 Shargotti, 2 Sharlins
Defence Squadron 1: 4 Tigaras (with Tishats)
Defence Squadron 2: 3 Sharaal (with Tishats)
Defence Squadron 3: 3 Tinashis
Defence Squadron 4: 3 Tinashis
Defence Squadron 5: 2 Morshin with Nials), 1 Letann
Defence Squadron 6: 4 Torothas

Victory Conditions: The last fleet with ships on the map wins. The Minbari have been pushed back as far as they can go, and will not leave the field except in a blaze of glory. The Earth Alliance knows this is the endgame. They must destroy the Minbari fleet, and destroy their cities before the Minbari are able to evacuate the planet, perhaps to wage another war of aggression against Humanity in the future.



By SCOTT MCGAFFIN

YOUR wolfpack of small attack ships swoops under an enemy destroyer and races headlong towards their target, the heavily armed and armored cruiser at the heart of the invader's formation. Closing to almost point blank, you let loose with everything you've got and are rewarded with a blinding flash as the cruiser's port side disintegrates. In the couple of seconds it takes to blink away the flash, you're racing away and out of the enemy formation. But victory can be fleeting, as the rear ship in your pack explodes under a hail of laser and particle fire. The price that is paid for speed and maneuverability is lack of durability, you think to yourself. Maybe in the next pass your wolfpack will be luckier. Then again maybe not.

No, this article is not about the proper use of Centauri wolfpacks, with their Vorchans, Demos and Mograths, but of the use of Brakiri wolfpacks. Brakiri wolfpacks? With what? Actually the Brakiri have four classes that can be used in wolfpacks. The most famous of all of course is the Halik and its sister ship, the Haltona. The other two classes are the Rakarta Patrol Frigate and the Kabrik Police Ship.

To use them as a wolfpack, you have to know their general overall capabilities and uses.

Halik- a dedicated fighter killer that is useful

only at close range. Unfortunately as mentioned in a previous article (September issue of Babcom), the Halik doesn't fare too well at close range against large well-armed units.

Haltona- multirole attack ship. Can function at all ranges. A nasty surprise for an opponent expecting a Halik.

Rakarta- a cheap, versatile ship that can be tailored to fit its desired role (depending on corporate limits). Unfortunately it's not agile.

Kabrik- anti-raider vessel not really suited for fleet actions mainly due to its poor armament.

First of all, you have to know whether you're going to use a multi-corporate fleet or just one corporation. If you're sticking with the solo corporation then you won't have access to all four ship types. A multi corporate fleet will give you the variety to mix and match your wolfpacks. This article will cover solo-corporate fleets.

For Ak-Habil the Halik, Haltona and Rakarta are available. Generally an Ak-Habil force will be composed mainly of cruiser sized vessels such as the Avioki. Because of the nature of Ak-Habil cruisers, you'll need at least some Haliks to act as escorts (mainly anti-fighter). For an Ak-Habil wolfpack, you'll probably want to build a pack based on fast and maneuverable long-range fire. Usually you'll only have one Haltona available (unless you're fielding a truly massive force). Take the sole Haltona and team it up with two or three Rakartas. Maybe toss in

a Halik if you're going to be up against a fighter heavy opponent. The key for this wolfpack is: do not close! The Graviton Beams on the Haltona will give you a pair of large, heavy weapons capable of causing serious harm to an enemy ship. Use the Halik's maneuverability to get yourself into a position where you can exploit an enemy weakness. The Rakartas, although they inflict less damage per turn, give you the ability to hit your opponent every turn with their Grav Cannons.

Consider moving this wolfpack into a position where your enemy is overall weakest or where you are able to get a couple good shots on a juicy enemy target. This could, and more likely would, force your opponent into sending out units to eliminate the pack. Units which will have to be reasonably fast and maneuverable to catch yours and units which will no longer be making attack runs on your cruisers. This should work excellent against the Centauri who are known for their hard-hitting, close range Demos and Vorchan attack ships. Move around, don't linger in one area. Once the Haltona has fired its Graviton Beams, it's going to need to recharge for quite a while. Use this time to circle around your opponent and pick a new location to cause havoc.

For Ly-Nakir, your only choice for a wolf pack ship is the Medium Laser equipped Rakarta. Group three or four together and send

them off to generally distract your opponent. Chances are the enemy is going to be concentrating on your Brokados, Cidikars and fighters. Tossing out a pack of small attack ships will further distract your opponent. Close to medium range, concentrate on one unit and fire all the lasers. Then run away and recharge. Consider targeting anti-fighter escorts so that your fighters will have an easier time. A half dozen Medium Laser hits is easily enough to mangle most escorts.

Another method is to close to virtually point blank range alongside the fighters and deliver one massive blow to your opponent. That being said, your frigates will no doubt take a serious if not fatal pounding. If you do this concentrate on the largest enemy ship or the most important enemy ship. Make them pay! This method is rather wasteful but could spare some of your fighters as your opponent may concentrate on the Rakartas and maybe ignore the fighters. Although be aware that a smart opponent will fire on the fighters before the fighters fire on his ships.

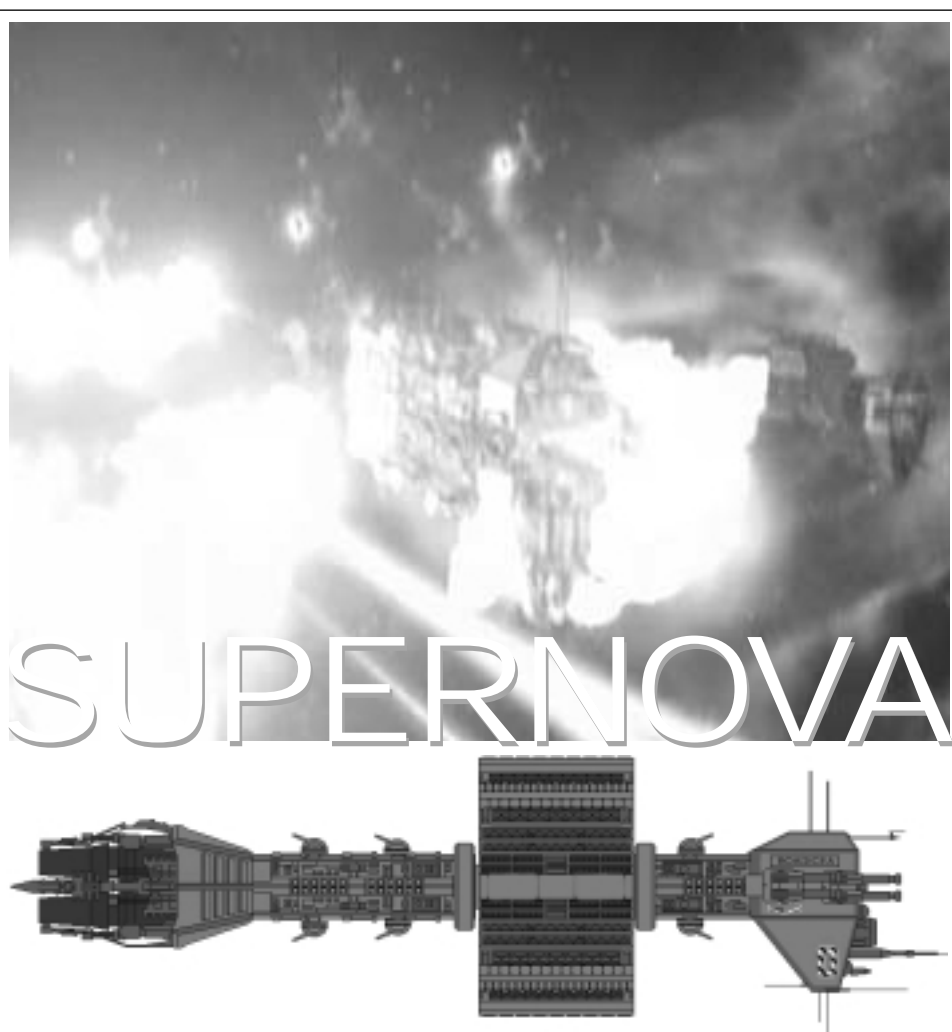
For Pri-Wakat you have the Rakarta (with Grav Cannon) and the Kabrik. In fleet engagements avoid the Kabrik entirely as it's inferior to the Rakarta in every way except if you need to bring a ton of boarding pods to the field. The majority of a Pri-Wakat fleet is going to be Ikortas, so your Rakartas are going to have very similar firepower. Use them as though they are weaker Ikortas.

For Im-Rehsa you only have the Rakarta (with Grav Cannon). You may want to use the Rakartas as escorts for the Tashkats and Shakarars you'll have. If not, form them up into packs of three or four and take runs at your opponent. You don't want to get too close but you want to get close enough that your opponent will be distracted by them and send some units after them. Units that will no longer be going after your expensive mainline units.

Due to the lethality of the Tashkat, your opponent will be going all out to destroy them. Use this, if he wants to chase your Tashkats around, get behind him and nip at his heels. For Im-Rehsa, distraction is the name of the game.

In general, unlike Centauri, Pak'ma'ra or Drazzi wolfpacks (to name a few), a Brakiri player does not want to close to point blank range or overrun an opponent, stay at medium to long range and snipe at your enemy.

* * *



EARTH'S sphere of influence expanded dramatically after the Dilgar War. Suddenly Earthforce found itself asked to conduct deep-range patrols and maintain ships on station far beyond what had been required in the past. While the Hyperions and Novas could be made to operate longer, the morale and health of their crews suffered from extended exposure to zero-gravity.

In 2237, a proposal was put forward by the shipyards at Proxima for a radical refit of several older Nova-A's layed up in mothballs. They would be essentially cut in half, and a rotating section inserted.

Earthforce was at first suspicious of the proposal. A spinning mass such as that proposed for the primary crew accommodation and operations centres would present numerous structural and inertial problems.

But Proxima's shipyards lobbied long and hard. They had all the answers - or so several powerful Senators insisted.

Eventually funds were released for the conversion of four of these old Nova-A hulls. They adopted a mix of light weapon mounts - with only the bow receiving modern-pattern arrays - to compensate for the drain on power through the new rotating section..

Large steel beams were welded to the exterior of the "SuperNovas" as they were becoming known in an attempt to increase hull rigidity. The rotating sections were simple in concept and application. Naval inspection teams returned enthusiastic about the advantages positive gravity promised.

This promise appeared to be sustained

throughout the initial performance trials. Feared hull vibration and structural stressing was not reported.

The four prototype SuperNovas were accepted into service. A Bill was placed before the Senate for the appropriation of funds to refit the entire Nova fleet.

But it was during the first intensive wargame exercises that the SuperNovas took part in that their deficiencies became apparent.

The EAS Boadicea tumbled out of control while attempting a hard turn. The gyroscopic effect of the rotating section was to blame.

All SuperNovas were then ordered to lock down their rotating sections before combat or heavy manoeuvres.

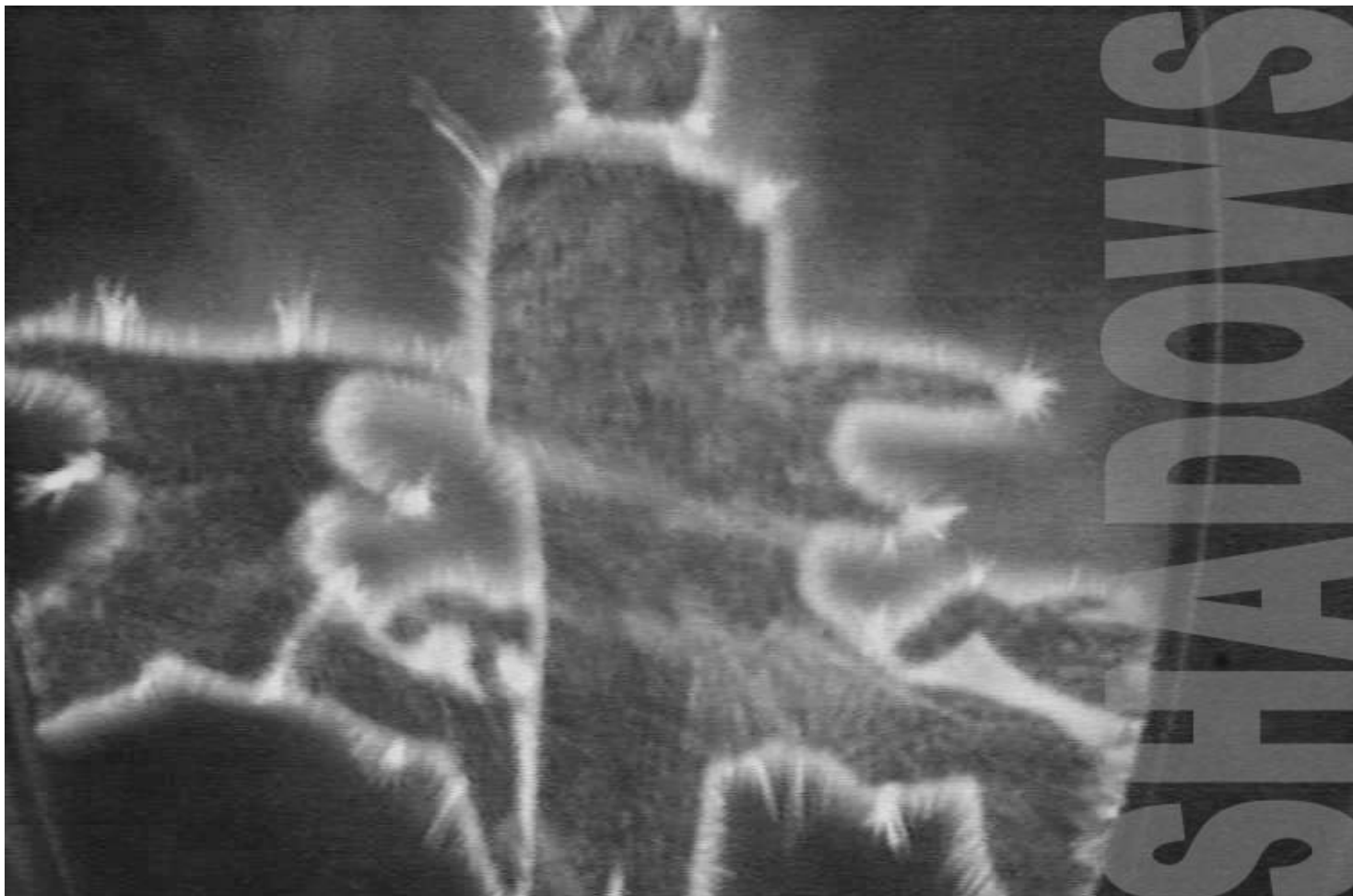
Six weeks later, the EAS Joan de Arc lost 15 of its crew when the zero-G engine spaces suddenly depressurised. Inspection teams found that the hull of the SuperNova had been stressed from the torque of the rotating section - weakening welds and riveted seams.

All four SuperNova's were immediately recalled from service. Inspections produced further evidence of structural defects.

The SuperNovas were mothballed pending modifications. The Senate Appropriations Bill was rejected. Two years later the Proxima shipyard finally conceded it had no operational fix for the structural problems.

The ships were reactivated during the defence of Proxima. But their weaponry, and unskilled crews, proved manifestly inadequate.

But the potential of the SuperNova was not overlooked. From these prototypes, the successful Omega Class was to be born.



THE SHADOWS have long relied on allies and servants to do their fighting for them. Races as diverse as the Drakh, Streib, Wurt, and many others are drawn into the service of the Shadows through the same 4 words that have echoed throughout the millenia, "What do you want?".

Sometimes, however, subordinated races and live flesh just isn't enough to carry out the Shadow's wishes of chaos and destruction. Towards the middle of the 23rd century, the Shadows embarked on a new project.

They began to create an army infused with their biotechnology, totally subservient to the Shadows or those granted the power of communicating with their living machines, such as the Technomages.

Designed to be nigh unstoppable, this army was unthinking, unfeeling, and was able to grow upon the bodies of their fallen enemies.

At their forefront were to be the Technomages, or those that could be turned, supporting these new shadowtech foot soldiers with their vast destructive powers.

The infiltration of Galen into Z'ha'Dum, combined with the eventual exodus of the Shadows and Vorlons from the known universe put an end to the Shadow's plans for chaos on a more intimate, ground based scale.

However, the technology is likely still out there, and it may only be a matter of time before the Drakh, or a rogue Technomage, reawakens the means to produce these fearsome troops.



Technology / Special Rules

Shadow Invisibility: The Shadows themselves are almost always shrouded in a veil of invisibility, protecting their relatively fragile bodies. Against any non-First One or Technomage stands, the Shadows are considered to have a profile 4 higher than normal.

Limited Invisibility: Some of the Shadow's creations are gifted with a more limited version of the Shadow's invisibility. Against any non-First One or Technomage stands, a creature with limited invisibility is considered to have a profile 3 higher than normal.

Shadowtech Creations: Much of a Shadow army is composed of biotech creations. Although many may have once been actual living beings, their soul and individuality has long since been lost, and they follow the orders of the Shadows (or others with the power to direct them) without question. They are unthinking and unfeeling, and will fight until completely destroyed. Shadow Creations are not subject to Morale or Pinning tests. They are assumed to automatically pass any they are required to take.

Absorption:

One of the most feared traits of the Shadow's creations, is their ability to take their enemy's dead, and transform them into new automatons that fight for the Shadow's will. If any enemy infantry stand is killed within 3" of a stand with the Absorption special ability, roll a d6 for each at the end of the turn on the table below. If the enemy unit was a vehicle, subtract 1 from the roll.

1-3: The enemy infantry were so blown to bits that they are not suitable material for absorption. The enemy stand is removed from the game and cannot later be turned into Machine People.

4-6: A sickening black goo oozes out from the Absorption stand, and covers the enemy's fresh dead. Quickly, the goo covers their corpses, and oozes into their bodies. These recent corpses rise up, and take their place in the battle line amongst the Shadow's other automatons, fresh soldiers ready to carry out the Shadow's hunger for chaos.

Place a new Machine People stand in base contact with the Absorption stand. From the next turn on, this stand, which has the same stats and abilities as a normal Machine People stand, fights as part of the Absorbing stand's platoon.

There is no limit to the number of enemy dead that a particular Absorption stand can turn into Machine People, and it may turn multiple stands per turn. However, each enemy stand that dies

GROPOS: SHADOW WARRIORS

may only be rolled for once. If there are multiple Absorption stands within 3", the Shadow player chooses one to roll, and that stand's platoon will be the one the new Machine People stand joins.

UNITS

Shadows: Standing on 6, sharply pointed sticks, the Shadows themselves are vaguely arachnid looking. Piercing red lights on their head, however, hide an intelligence and malice that is millennia old. Although they are physically relatively vulnerable to enemy fire, their invisibility generally protects them from any harm. They are not above taking a personal involvement in their operations, however, with several Shadows in the presence of favored agents such as Morden nearly 24 hours a day.

Offensively they are able to send out piercing bolts of light that cut through the souls of living beings. This is especially effective against other beings composed totally of light, such as Vorlons.

Special: Company Commander, May Call for Orbital Bombardment, Shadow Invisibility

Machine People: Designed to be the ultimate in ground forces, the Shadows created the Machine People to serve them or their favored servants, the Technomages. Machine People are created and powered in a similar manner to their space vessels. Innocent beings are captured and brought to Shadow installations. Here, the Shadows or their servants infect them with Shadow tech, which infuses their body, robbing them of all individuality or personality, and making them follow

orders with-

out question. Their entire body is covered with the same slick, black skin that covers Shadow vessels,

major exception. These creatures have additional Shadowtech enabling them to take freshly dead living bodies, infuse these bodies with Shadowtech, and create fresh Machine People immediately ready to serve the Shadows. Needless to say this ability is quite disconcerting to the enemies of the Shadows, enabling a Shadow force to spread fear and confusion throughout the ranks of an enemy force, as well as making a Shadow force quite self sufficient.

These creations are unarmed, the space used by the Plasma Beams given over to the biotech necessary for their absorption powers.

Special: Shadowtech Creation, Absorption

Probe Drones: Shadow Probe Drones are small, 3 foot wide, floating spider like creatures, capable of swiftly moving about the battlefield searching for new enemies for the Shadow's to crush. They are armed only with Light Molecular Beams for self defense.

Special: Forward Observers, Self Ordering

Shadow Light Transport: Shadow forces are given mobility and tactical strike capabilities by their light transports. Although Shadow forces are generally delivered to strike zones by full Shadow Cruisers, it is often not possible to maintain a Shadow Cruiser on station for the sole purpose of transporting troops around a planet. In these cases, smaller Shadow Light Transports are called in. Roughly the size of an EA VTOL, and shaped like a smaller, spined, but bloated version of a Shadow Cruiser, these trans-

ports provide a great level of flexibility to Shadow



Technomages: The Technomages were originally created to serve the Shadows as their most powerful, and premiere agents of chaos. Unfortunately, the Taratimude destroyed themselves in an orgy of violence, and those who remained with the Shadow's gift severed all publicly known ties with the Shadows in an attempt to avoid the Shadow's programming imbedded within their implants. Recently, the Shadows have taken great pains to bring the Technomages back within their fold, successfully turning a number of mages to their service.

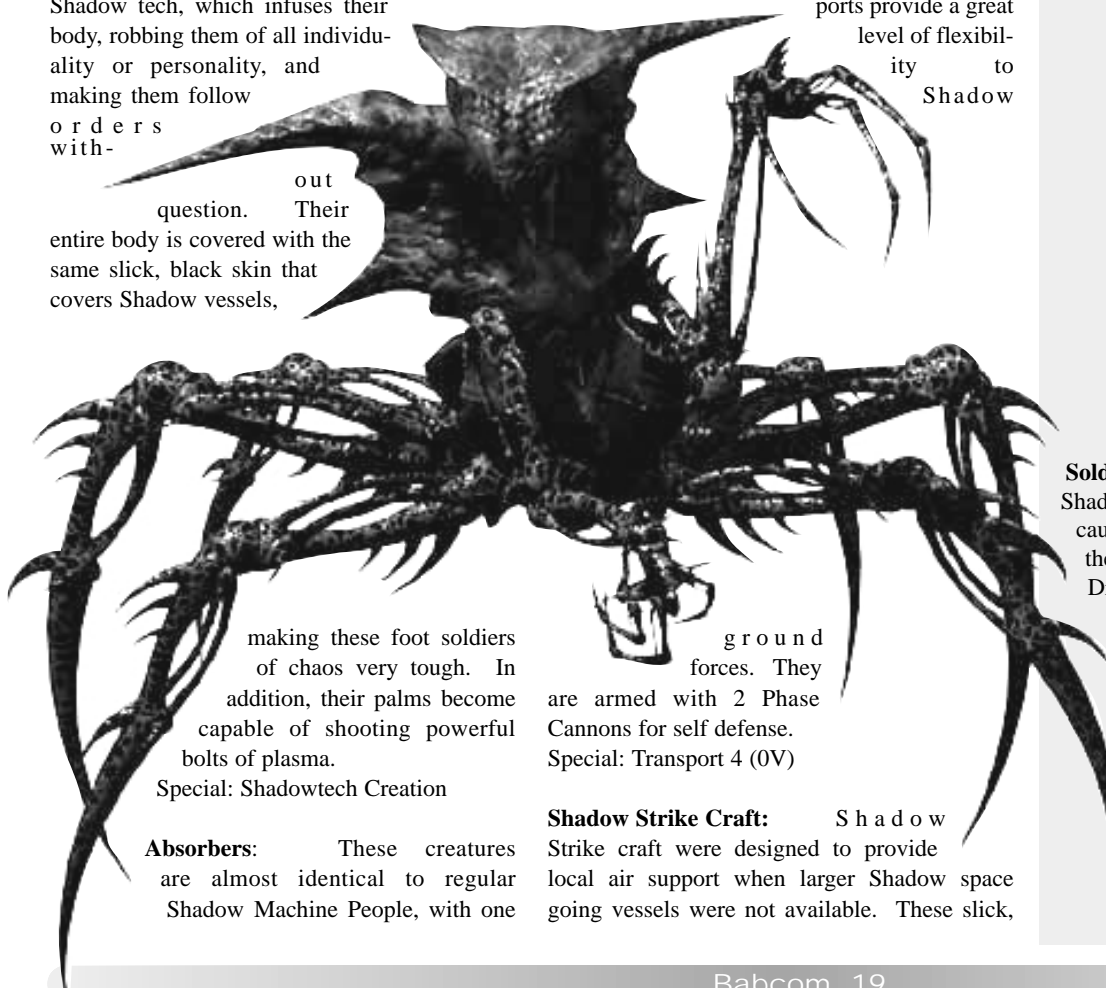
Technomages follow all rules as outlined in Babcom #8. In addition, they have the below abilities.

Special: Company Commander, May Call for Orbital Bombardment



Soldiers of Darkness: When the Shadows wish to assassinate opponents or cause chaos without drawing attention to themselves, or their well known allies, the Drakh, they send out creatures known only as Soldiers of Darkness. 12 feet tall, and shrouded in a cloak of invisibility, they hunt down the opponents of the Shadows, often ripping out their organs, though it is not known to what purpose these stolen organs are put to. The book of G'Quan has one of the few known pictures of these creatures.

Special: Shadowtech Creation, Limited Invisibility



making these foot soldiers of chaos very tough. In addition, their palms become capable of shooting powerful bolts of plasma.

Special: Shadowtech Creation

Absorbers: These creatures are almost identical to regular Shadow Machine People, with one

ground forces. They are armed with 2 Phase Cannons for self defense.

Special: Transport 4 (0V)

Shadow Strike Craft: Shadow Strike craft were designed to provide local air support when larger Shadow space going vessels were not available. These slick,



Shadow Assault Ship

By ROMAN ALEXANDER PERNER

THIS ship started from a CGI image I found on the Internet a while ago; it inspired me, I mailed around with the ships creator, got me a top view and did the SCS (with a little help from Tyrel Lohr, since back then I couldn't yet make pdf icons myself).

I made it a "Shadow Assault Frigate" (as the Shadows have no assault ship yet, and in older ship designation schemes a frigate is something between a destroyer & cruiser...) - Imagine this: the ship closes with its target, firing its light slicer beam, then uses its tendrils to attach itself to the target vessel like an oversized breaching pod (the long tendrils "grab" the other ship, even shifting advanced armor can't help you there...), uses the slicer again to punch through the hull and releases its cargo of shadow creatures into the other ship, where it'll be "Alien-time" ;-) as the aforementioned creatures take out the defending marines... Most of the rules are already in place, just add a few tweaks to represent the fearsome nature of the kind of things the shadows would send to invade other ships and whatever else (there was also a "flash-forward" in "Babylon Squared" that indicated that in another possible future invisible and pretty much unstoppable shadow creatures were invading B5...) - perhaps a big bonus on marine missions, which get halved if the creatures are cut off from their mothership (since they'd lose the tactical coordination once they are no longer linked/remote-controlled - I'd say +4 if controlled, +2 otherwise; the Shadows can build quite some nasty creatures as we know from "The Long Dark")

Another possibility would be to let the ship create additional boarding parties from its structure like with shadow fighters - the ship usually has a storage full of pre-produced creatures, but in case of emergencies it can also create additional "marine contingents" worth of shadow creatures by drawing on its structure (not that this would be terribly smart, since it doesn't have too much of that - structure that is. But when you really need a few extra boarders...). Those would not be independent creatures though, and therefore be limited to "wreck havoc" missions if cut off from their controlling assault ship and would also die pretty quick if their mothership was destroyed (just like ShadowFighters!) They also wouldn't be that good as the other, custom-engineered boarders and enjoy only half their mission bonus...



black skinned flying craft, slightly smaller than an EA Valkyrie, are capable of rapidly moving around the battlefield, providing quick, localized anti-armor support wherever needed. They are armed with 2 Phase Cannons, and a Heavy Molecular Beam.

Special: May fire all weapons, as per the HAT rules.

Shadow Support Craft: Long ranged local support is provided by these craft. Floating several feet off the ground, these bulbous, black skinned craft are capable of spitting out large balls of plasma, which can be directed in arcing patterns down upon enemy forces, similar to artillery.

TO&E

Shadow Strike Force:

This is typical of the forces the Shadows planned around their Machine people before they left for beyond the rim. Their strong Machine People infantry, combined with powerful support vehicles, and the terrifying Absorption unit, would have spread chaos across any planet upon which it was unleashed.

HQ:	1 platoon
Unlimited Platoons:	3-6 platoons
Limited Platoons:	0-3 platoons
Support Units:	0-3 platoons

HQ:	1-2 Shadow Stands
Cost:	18/36/48/70 each
and	
2 Machine People	
Cost:	32/48/96/130

Or

1-2 Technomages (See Babcom #8 for rules)
Cost: Varies per Babcom #8
And
2 Machine People
Cost: 32/48/96/130

Unlimited Platoons:

Line Platoon:

3-6 Machine People
Cost: 16/32/48/65 each
and
0-2 Absorbers
Cost: 20/40/60/85 each

Transport Platoon:

1-3 Shadow Light Transports
Cost: 32/64/96/130 each

Drakh:

Any Drakh Unlimited Platoon may be included per the rules for Drakh in GROPOS. (These will be included in a future edition of Babcom)

Limited Platoons:

Strike Platoon:

3-6 Shadow Strike Craft
Cost: 46/92/138/190 each

Reconnaissance Platoon:

3-6 Probe Drones
Cost: 14/28/42/60 each

Support Units:

Support Group:

1-3 Shadow Support Craft
Cost: 44/88/132/180 each

Assassination Team:

1-3 Soldiers of Darkness
Cost: 15/30/45/65 each

* * *

In to battle with the Bin'Tak



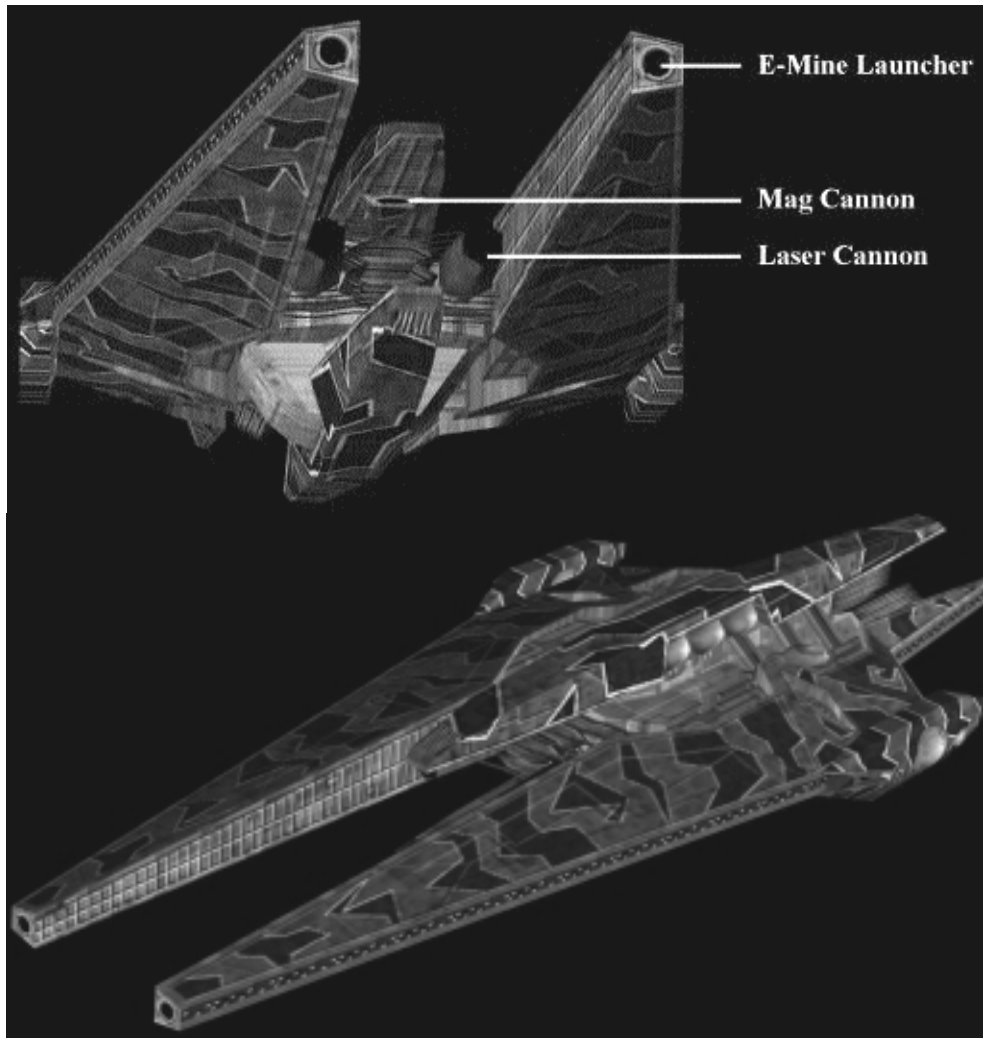
By CHRISTOPHER PHANG

THE PRIDE of the Narn fleet is their battleship, The Bin'Tak. Armed with 6 Heavy Lasers, 2 Ion Torpedoes, 2 E-Mines, 1 Mag Gun and 5 Lt. Pulse Cannons and Twin Arrays each. The Bin'Tak is bristling with weaponry and ready for a fight. However, the main advantage the Bin'Tak possesses is not its armaments rather its durability. Based on structure alone, it has around 100 or more per side with armor at 6/5. This means even 3 Heavy Lasers shot directly into the structure only may not be enough to blow it away.

By itself, the Bin'Tak is a formidable ship. It has its rapid firing E-mines and Ion Torpedoes to engage enemies at long range. Heavy Lasers when it gets closer and finally the Mag Gun to finish the opposition off. Its light weapons have good coverage all around providing decent cover from fighters. It can also launch 18 fighters to provide either anti-ship capability with the Frazis or fighter cover with the Goriths. Finally, it is quite agile for its size being able to travel at speed 6 and still turn twice or faster with the ability to shorten turns. This allows the Bin'Tak to maneuver at range while being a decent infighter if the need arises.

In a fleet, The Bin'Tak can easily keep up with its cruisers and its weapon mix allows it to fight effectively with them. It can easily add to the fleet's firepower at range with its stand off weapons and add a bite with its Mag Gun. It almost does not need an escort with its low cost and durability. With G'Quans supporting, the Bin'Tak adds the same amount of firepower plus 2 Ion Torpedoes and Heavy Lasers, 1 Mag Gun and 6 more fighters. Combined with HCVs and medium ships, a strong core can be built around the Bin'Tak as it is durable enough to survive the attention it would receive from its opponents. Ignoring the Bin'Tak would be like having a berserker in your face as its all-around weaponry and quick charging weapons (except for Heavy Lasers) would cause havoc in a formation of enemy ships.

Despite its strength, the Bin'Tak does suffer from some disadvantages. It's huge making it easy to hit despite its improved sensors. It's too much of a jack-of-all-trades making it useful in most situations but unable to excel in any one particular area. But when you compare it to the Narn fleet philosophy, it fits in rather well. Most



Narn vessels work on the theory on being decently armed with good weapon arcs in exchange for good maneuverability and durability.

The Bin'Tak is simply an upsized version of a G'Quan. It is also vulnerable to the glass jaw syndrome that plagues the G'Quan hull but fortunately, it can easily execute the sliver attack approach like its smaller brethren. Losing its very durable nose means losing over 60% of its offensive firepower, which is not good for the Bin'Tak.

Since it can perform any role, using it in any Narn fleet is actually quite simple. In a stand off fleet consisting of G'Quans and Dag'Kars, it can just contribute its E-mines, Ion Torpedoes and Heavy lasers to the fray. In fact, if its confident at maintaining the distance, it can shutdown its rear weaponry to sustain charge its Heavy Lasers. In a close in fleet, it can shut off its E-

mines for extra thrust and support with its big guns. The main problem a commander might find that as a battleship, it just seems like flying a slightly larger version of a G'Quan.

Offhand, getting 2 G'Quans may be better than purchasing the Bin'Tak yet few ships can take the kind of damage the Bin'Tak can handle and it makes good bait. Worse still, if the enemy chooses to ignore it, it can easily cause a lot of damage. Imagine a typical approach, the Bin'Tak turtles and fires E-Mines and Ion torpedoes. When it gets closer to its optimal laser range, it paints a target and fires 3 to 4 Heavy Lasers on it. The next turn, it's Mag Gun is in range and as it flies by, the other unfired rear and side Heavy Lasers finish the job as it maneuvers into position to repeat this on another target.

May G'Quan smile on you as you bring the fury of the pride on the fleet upon your enemies!

Striving for the good of the State

By ALEX ROBERTS

FOR MUCH of their history the Moradi people were a relatively peaceful people, devoted to their art. Moradi artisans and musicians were very accomplished, producing works to rival that of such Earth greats as Beethoven and Mozart.

The Moradi were well traveled as well, participating in Interstellar commerce, and many Moradi learned the languages of other races. However, shortly before the formation of the Interstellar Alliance, a new regime swept to power on the Moradi homeworld. Supported by the many Moradi who were becoming fearful of foreign influences in their culture, as well as the growing chaos gripping the galaxy during the late 2250's, religious fundamentalists took control of the Moradi government. Life would never again be the same for the Moradi people.

The initial changes were minor. Citing their impurity, foreigners were forced to leave Moradi territory. Most trade with other races was cut off. Soon the learning of foreign languages was forbidden, except for essential translators. The Moradi leadership did not want the minds of their people becoming cluttered with the words and language of other peoples. Eventually the government edicts went beyond simple fear and distrust of foreign-

ers. The Moradi people were to spend their time building things that would directly affect the power and influence of the Moradi people, including weapons and vessels of war. An ambitious ship building program was begun. Parlaying the abundance of crystals and skills with laser technology, this new fleet was well armed, and well equipped, at least for a minor nation with relatively limited resources compared to such nations as the Centauri Empire or the Minbari Federation.

Art and music, unfortunately, were considered a waste of time, and subversive, in light of the new goals of the Moradi nation. In a sweeping declaration, the Moradi government outlawed all art. All knowledge of art in the planetary databases was wiped clean. Statues were pulled down. Artwork the planet over was destroyed. Books were burned. Any who opposed this edict were arrested and executed by the government's secret police. Many tried to make copies of their people's art and culture on data crystals, in a desperate hope to safeguard their history for future generations. Most were unsuccessful. They were found and in numerous cases executed on the spot, without even the benefit of a show trial. One, however, did succeed. His set of crystals is currently held by the Earth Alliance gov-

ernment, in the hopes that some day the Moradi people will ask for their history and art back. It is not inconceivable, however, that, given the Moradi's willingness to use force to pressure the IAS Victory into returning a set of crystals, that they may come into conflict with the Earth Alliance in the future, should that knowledge ever get out.

Special Rules:

A Moradi fleet may purchase a Religious leader as per TTV.

WEAPONS:

The Moradi have extensive experience with laser technology, though certainly not on a level of that shown by the Hyach. However, their expertise is such that they have eschewed other weaponry types, and focused only on laser technology to outfit their navy. Given their reluctance in dealing with foreign nations, purchasing weapons technology is out of the question. The Moradi religious leaders also favor lasers, not just because they are indigenously produced, but because the laser represents the piercing eye of their god searing the soul of the foreign infidels.

Super Heavy Laser Beam: The newest invention of the Moradi research and development labs, this weapon takes the standard Heavy Laser Beam common on Moradi

ships and focuses more energy through the lenses, increasing its power 50%. However, due to the larger size and limits on the equipment, it has a significantly reduced arc of fire.

Heavy Laser Beam: This is the standard heavy weapon used by the Moradi, and found on all of their larger vessels.

Medium Laser Beam: The Medium Laser beam is a smaller version of the Heavy Laser Beam. It is used as a secondary weapon, as well as being the main weapon on the Moradi's smaller Nergal frigates.

Light Laser Beam: The light laser is found on all Moradi vessels. It is used to provide close in defense against fighters and other small craft.

SHIPS:

Dahak Heavy Cruiser:

The Dahak Heavy Cruiser is the mainstay of the new Moradi fleet. It was one of the first ships the new Moradi government built solely for war (although the previous Moradi government did have armed vessels for national defense, they were not designed for projection of power missions). It is well armed to the fore with numerous light and heavy laser beam mounts. It is also relatively fast for its strength. However, its relatively light struc-



FLEET ACTION

ture and lack of rear firing weaponry can be disadvantages should an enemy manage to outmaneuver the Dahak.

Anshar Light Carrier:

Recognizing the need for fighters after monitoring the navies of several of their neighbors, the Moradi began to modify a number of their successful Dahak class cruisers to be Carriers. Stripping out the heavier weaponry, the Moradi were able to include facilities and space for 2 flights of their new fighter, the Girru.

Girru Heavy Fighter:

The Girru is a heavy fighter designed to provide long range force projection for Moradi fleets. Though not particularly fast, it is well armed and protected. Given the Moradi's relative lack of experience in naval and fighter design, the Girru is a respectable first addition to the Moradi fleet. Shaped in a Y format, it has 2 light lasers firing forwards.

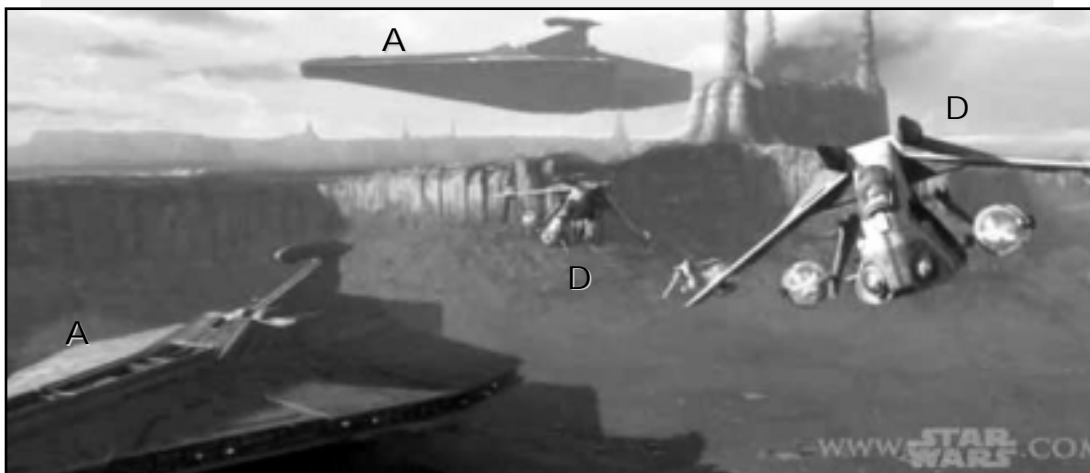
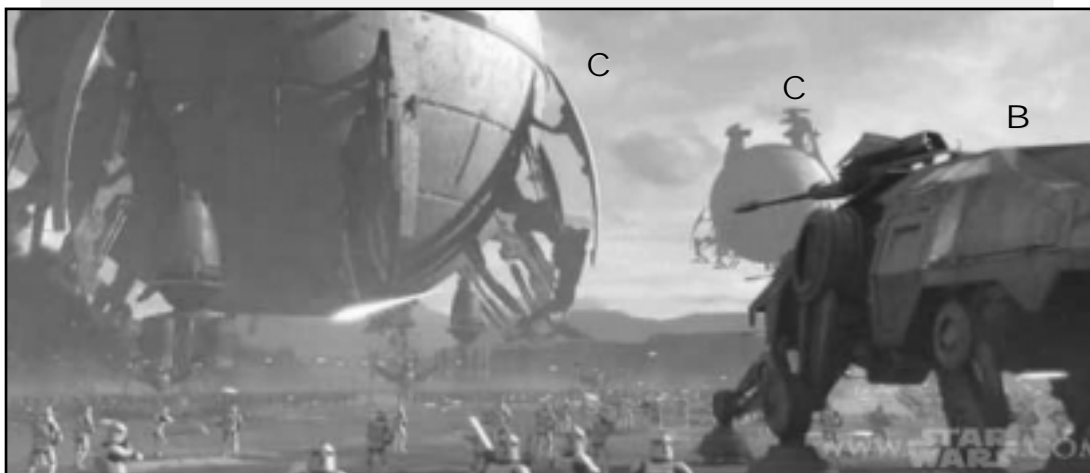
Nergal Fast Escort:

Although the Dahak is the most typically encountered Moradi vessel, the Moradi have begun to produce the Nergal escort frigate. Recognizing the need for screening and scout duties in any large fleet action, this small ship is being produced in relatively large numbers. It is armed with a forward firing medium laser beam, and 2 side mounted light laser beams.

Anu Battleship:

The Anu was designed to intimidate any potential enemies of the Moradi, thus ensuring they not challenge the Moradi people, or worse, try to infect them with their impure thoughts and ways. The Anu is a large ship, well armed with heavy and super heavy laser beams, as well as smaller close in defense weaponry. In keeping with Moradi tactics and mindset, the vast majority of this weaponry points forward. Although the Moradi admirals would like more of these vessels, the extremely high cost and difficulty of building the super heavy laser means that they are very few of these powerful vessels in existence.

(The above ships can all be found at:
<http://www.robertshome.org/gaming/b5/fa>)



Aspotters guide to the craft of Star Wars: Episode II Attack of the Clones

The most recent, and longest, trailer promoting the imminent release of Star Wars, Episode II: Attack of the Clones contained many scenes demonstrating the transition from the universe of Episode I to the more familiar imagery of Episode IV. Storm Troopers look like Storm Troopers. Warships look like the Star Destroyers we have come to know. Here is a glimpse at what new craft you can expect to see in the new movie.

A: Republic Military Cruiser (Accumulator Class)

Resembles a Star Destroyer and transports the clone troopers into battle. It is shown in the

trailers picking up Stormtroopers from Coruscant(?) and, later, landed on a desolate world (presumably after deploying the troops).

B: AT-TE

The AT-TE (All Terrain Tactical Enforcer) is a six-legged walker with guns fore and aft. The success of this model led to the future development of the AT-AT, AT-ST and the AT-HE (All Terrain Heavy Inforcer).

C: Federation Droid Control Ship / Core Ship

The Federation returns in Episode II. These are SIMILAR to the sphere sections of the Droid Control Ship, but it lacks the crescent arms.

D: Republic Attack Gunship

This is a new attack ship seen in Episode II used by the clones. The LAAT (Low-Altitude Assault Transport) comes in both "/i" (infantry) and "/c" (cargo) versions.

Once upon an Orieni

Compiled by
CHRIS NASIPAK

THE YEAR is 2245: just before Earth's first contact with the Minbari. The Dilgar War is long over. The Narn and Centauri continue to skirmish, when a long-disused jump-gate portal opens, disgorging a giant flagship and an armada of lesser followers... The local Centauri ambassador gives only a shudder, and the word "Orieni".

Hyperspace is a strange place, full of gravitic oddities, weird spatial anomalies, and dimensional strangeness. Two centuries ago, an Orieni fleet set out for a Centauri colony, intending to land an assault force and take the planet. Two days ago, their scouts emerged from hyperspace and began probing the system they'd arrived in. Somewhat shocked by what they discovered, they ordered an immediate attack.

Now, the fleet is closing on the colony planet. Only a small fleet is there to defend the planet and orbital station from the assault...

SETUP: Place two boards long side on to make a 42x60 hex playing area. The xx60 board edge is the planetary atmosphere.

DEFENDER: Choose up to 10,000 points with which to defend the colony, including at least one base (the Civilian base and Raider Sanctuary Base are available to all races for the sake of variety). Place the base within eight hexes of the planetary map edge. OSATs, minefields, and ships may then be placed at will within 40 hexes of the planetary atmosphere.

ATTACKER:

- 1 Paragon Elite Strike Command Ship
- 6 Uplift Assault Shuttles
- 12 Templar Interceptors
- 18 Shining Star Hunter-Killers
- 3 Enlightenment Assault Transports
- 36 Templar Interceptors
- 36 Uplift Assault Shuttles
- 1 Benevolent Heavy Scout
- 1 Vigilant Combat Support Ship

- 6 Templar Interceptors
- 12 Minesweeper Shuttles

- 1 Commune Group Leader
- 4 Steadfast Escort Corvettes
- 2 Storm Front Missile Corvettes
- 2 Vengeful Laser Frigates
- 2 Devout Escort Frigates

All units are at their latest upgrade (2007). May jump in to the 'northern' board segment or enter from the long edge thereof at the player's discretion.

VICTORY CONDITIONS: For every assault shuttle that enters the planetary atmosphere at a speed of less than 4, the Orieni player scores one point.

1 - 8 Some troops land, but are quickly overrun by defending infantry.

9 - 16 A major ground battle ensues. The Orieni are thrown back with heavy casualties to both sides.

17 - 25 A major ground battle ends in decimation of the defenders. The weakened Orieni force orders orbital bombardment of cities until the planet surrenders.

25 - 30 Heavy fighting ends in Orieni victory.

31+ The defenders are overrun and quickly crushed.

VARIATIONS: Substitute a Dilgar force for the Orieni fleet, or any other invasion you might find appropriate. (Perhaps utilizing the Advanced Dilgar units found elsewhere in this issue, or making similar updates to the Orieni.)

THE BATTLEFORCES

Civilian Battleforce (Peter Lloyd)

- 90x Delta-V Fighters- 90x32=2880 pts
- Small Base- 350 pts, 48 Fighters
- 7 Q-ships- 7x350=2450 pts, 7x6=42 fighters
- 2 Pirate Hunters- 2x425= 850 pts
- 1 Missile Barge (Alpha)- 550pts
- (100 Flash Missiles- 600pts, 30 Heavy Missiles- 120pts) Total- 1270pts

- 50 P-3 Mines (IFF)- 50x22= 1,100pts
- 40 D-3 Mines (IFF)- 40x27.5= 1,100pts
- Total: 10,000pts

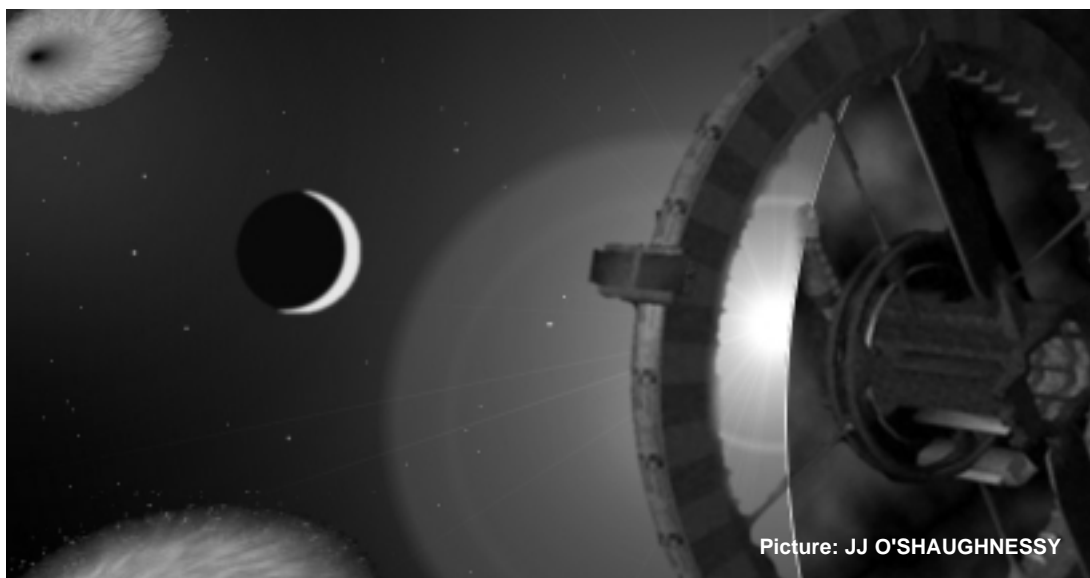
Tactics: Place mines between Orieni and Planet. Launch D-Vs, and move forward with Q-ships and D-Vs. Hunters and Missile Barge remain in close orbit with the base.

Defenders of Terra (General Lefcourt)

- 1 Orion Delta 2400
- 36 Star furies 2052
- 2 Tethys Police Leader 2*390 = 780
- 3 Plasma Tethys 3*350 = 1050
- 1 Hyperion Pulse Cruiser 740
- 1 Hecate Alpha 615
- 12 Star furies 684
- 75 D2 DEW Mines 1500
- 10 Flash missiles 60
- 10 Hvy. Missiles 40
- 3 Multiwarhead missiles 72
- Total: 9993 pts.

Tactics: So, the Orieni want to come out and play? It is too bad for them that they stumbled upon some state-of-the-art EA vessels and a newly finished Orion Station. We handled the Dilgar so we can handle some stray Orieni...

What do we know about them? They like big command ships and boatloads of MCVs. They also have a decent light fighter (even by modern standards) and many H-K (hunter-killer) Kamikaze fighters. They also like Matter weapons, have some lasers but can't intercept anything but ballistic weapons with their Rapid Gatling Railguns. They just put many of them on their hulls and these weapons are nasty. 2D6 matter damage with a ROF of 2/turn can waste even modern fighters with ease and you don't want to think about what they can do to your ships. As these are -2/hex weapons you should keep the range open as much as possible. I know that you should defend your base but you can't afford this close-in slaughter. Given the choice I'd rather cut my losses and give up my base to



Picture: JJ O'SHAUGHNESSY

keep my fleet alive.

So after we covered what you shouldn't do here is what you should do:

1) Kill the H-K fighters. If you thought Delegor frigates were bad you were wrong. Their only disadvantage is that they have relatively few thrust for a fighter and that their initiative bonus is low. Try to intercept them as far away as possible with your own fighters and as many flash and MW missiles as possible.

2) While you are at it try to kill as many Templar Interceptors as possible. They are light fighters and will give your Furies a hard time when they are attacking either ships or H-Ks. Again Flash missiles are the weapon of choice though when in doubt shoot them at H-Ks instead.

3) Kill the MCVs. There will be many of them and they are the backbone of the Orieni fleet. Hvy. Missiles are nice but basically any weapon will do the trick.

4) You know the drill. Kill ELINT-vessels and then the rest. If you survived till now you shouldn't have that many problems anymore.

Final notes: You have a nice minefield consisting of 75 SPBs. Use it.

Any ship or fighter flight foolish enough to get close to you will pay the price and even the mighty Orieni Command ships trying to utilize their array of Rapid Gatling Railguns on, say, a poor base will find them somewhat detrimental to their health. Hide your fleet behind it and don't come out to play unless you have a very good reason. Any weapon used on a mine is a weapon not used on your ships or the base. And finally one more time, KEEP THE RANGE OPEN.

Hostile Takeovers (Grand Inquisitor Dask)

Being a corporate culture, the Brakiri are accustomed to hostile takeover attempts. It's when those takeover attempts are carried out with heavy starship weaponry that they get severely peeved. And so it was that when the Orieni finally made their play to recapture the glory days of their fallen empire that the Brakiri, still angry over the Dilgar invasions, decided enough was enough. Now, as the Orieni assault fleet closed on one of their largest colony worlds, they only had to make their decision stick...

1 Alykent Guardpost (575)

12 Tokrana OSATs (1,200)
10 Rehsa-G DEW Mines (240)
4 Kabrik Police Ships (1,400)
3 Avioki Heavy Cruisers (2,175)
1 Lykorai Supercarrier (925)
30 Falkosi Light Fighters (1,140)
30 Pikitos Heavy Fighters (2,340)
Total: 9,995

Imperial Revenge? (Venlesh)

This "fleet" should be the stationary defense of an important colony with most of its defense fleet missing. (Of course everybody knows that no one can successfully assault a Centauri colony when its fleet would be ready.) :)

Stationary Defenses:

Kraken War Base 5000 pts
4 Phalanx OSATs 1000 pts
24 Razik Light F. 720 pts
12 Sentri Med. F. 504 pts
63 Raji-16 mines 567 pts
with IFF-enhancement (9pts each)

Remaining Patrol/Police Forces

1 Covran 730 pts
1 Vorchar 500 pts
3 Havens 975 pts
Total: 9996 pts.

I would deploy the "fleet" like this:

Kraken in the center with the OSATS 2 hexes in front slightly to the sides (1 and 3 hexes left and right). Half of the mines would be deployed in a half-moon shape slightly to the front (3 to 9 hexes). The rest of them would be deployed a bit farther out (approx. 30 to 40 hexes). The fighters and Havens should keep his HK-fighters at bay while the Kraken and the OSATs first try to kill the command ships and then the MCVs. The Scouts provide blanket and defensive EW, perhaps even OEW for the OSATs if the enemy units get very close.

IMO the Centauri are the best race to use for a defensive scenario (Kraken and their OSATs are great). And of course the Orieni would be highly "motivated" to take revenge for their defeat against the forces of the "Lion of the Galaxy".

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EDITOR:
Christopher Phang
(regret)

FICTION
Reid Hupach
(reid)

b5news_fiction
@yahoo.com

TACTICS & ARTICLES
Alexander Kettle
(squawk)

b5news_tactics
@yahoo.com
b5news_articles
@yahoo.com

SHIPS & SCENARIOS
Alex Roberts
(aroberts)

b5news_ships
@yahoo.com
b5news_scenarios
@yahoo.com

PROOFREADING
Robert Garlinghouse
(Gergle)

b5news_proof
@yahoo.com

PRODUCTION
Jamie Seidel
(Diogenes)

b5news_layout
@yahoo.com

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