

# THE GREAT MACHINE

ISSUE 10 September 2004



**Grey 17  
is Missing**



## Hello Friend, Call me Draal!

This month has been a sad one for those of us toiling in the depths of the Great Machine. One of our beloved caretakers, Zathras, has passed on under unfortunate circumstances, stolen from his before being allowed to achieve his full potential.

But that must not keep us from looking forward to the horizon and immersing ourselves on the knowledge that the Machine puts at our finger tips.

Why, even now I can see a world -- a distant world -- home to six distinct alien species. What is this? The world is dead, destroyed, and its inhabitants are now scattered. One of them is even dead now!

The Machine shows me other things. Great worms rise from the desert, their blue-eyed riders looking out over a sea of sand. Why mechanization is this? I have never seen such a world in all my days.

More shapes cloud my vision. Insectoid hives descend on defenseless worlds. What horrors! And a ship, a living ship, traverses the borders between realities fleeing some great evil.

Another evil, the Ancient Enemy, now takes form... I can see them... but they can see me...

No, this is a journey that you must make on your own. I am but a guide, a guardian who watches over you as you travel on your journey. Be well!

**DRAAL,**  
KEEPER OF THE GREAT MACHINE

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## Goodbye, Zathras

### The Great Machine Says Goodbye to a Caretaker

*(Compiled from multiple sources)*

For the third time this year<sup>1</sup>, we have had to say goodbye to one of the Babylon 5 cast. Tim Choate, the actor who portrayed the character of Zathras, was killed September 24, 2004 in a motorcycle accident after being struck by a car.

The first reports of Choate's death came only days after the event, with news being posted first to the Babylon 5 moderated newsgroup on Usenet. Soon thereafter, Patricia Tallman ("Lyta Alexander" from Babylon 5) confirmed Choate's unfortunate death. He was headed to a play rehearsal when his motorcycle was struck.

Tim Choate was born on October 11, 1954 in Dallas, Texas. Choate earned a fine arts degree at the University of Texas at Austin in 1977.

In the early 1980s, he appeared in Beth Henley's "Crimes of the Heart" on Broadway. He also appeared in John Guare's "Bosoms and Neglect" at South Coast Repertory in Costa Mesa in 2001 and, more recently, at the Shakespeare Festival LA.

His film credits include roles in "The Europeans" (1979), "Soapdish" (1991), "Jefferson in Paris" (1995) and "Pearl Harbor"



(2001). He also appeared in many television movies and TV series, including "Murder, She Wrote," "Newhart," "Coach," "Frasier" and "Diagnosis Murder." In "Babylon 5," he played the recurring alien character Zathras.

At the time of his death, he was in rehearsals for "Macbett" at the Globe Playhouse in West Hollywood.

We here at The Great Machine must pay a special tribute to Choate and the lovable character that he portrayed. It may have been JMS who wrote the dialogue, but it was Choate that truly brought the character to life, turning a minor

background character into one of the most popular and enduring in the Babylon 5 universe. Every funny Zathras inspired commentary from this moment on, whether you find it in these pages or elsewhere, will be tinged with sadness. The humor may still be there, but the knowledge that "Zathras" is gone will haunt each laugh.

Tim Choate leaves behind a wife, Madalyne, and a son, Flynn. As with the children of Richard Biggs, a memorial fund is being established for Flynn Choate. More information will likely be available in the coming months.



A public memorial to Tim Choate will be held Monday October 11th at 11 a.m. until 1:30 p.m. at the Egyptian Theatre in Hollywood. The Egyptian Theatre is located at 6712 Hollywood Blvd. between Las Palmas and McCadden Blvd., east of Highland and north of Selma and Sunset. The family is having a private funeral. All are welcome to the memorial.

As fans of the series, we can only hope that this will be the last tragic loss that we will have to suffer this year. We have lost both of the Franklins and Zathras during 2004. Let's just hope that all of our other old friends decide to stick around long into the future.

<sup>1</sup> Paul Winfield, the actor that played General Richard Franklin, died in March of 2004. Richard Biggs, well-known as Dr. Stephen Franklin, died in May of 2004.

\* \* \*

## Where is the *Missing Pieces* Issue?

**By Tyrel Lohr**

So where is the issue of The Great Machine you were promised? To put it bluntly, it is running behind. I haven't had time to get everything together for that issue, including the feature ships that still need PDF'd. Paul had finished up his Robotech ships, and all of our contributor's articles had managed to push this issue over the 40 page limit already. So, what to do? After conferring, the decision was made to release an issue now, and then finish up Missing Pieces to be released at the end of the month.

So what do you have to look forward to in the Missing Pieces issue? Do any of these topics interest you:

- Lumati and Antareans
- Romulan War Ear Units
- Kzinti, Hydrans and Andromedans  
(and possibly Lyrans, too!)
- Remans
- Escalation Wars Ships for the Vendrizzi, Courata, Ragalthan, and Vendrizzi
- Scenarios
- More Thirdspace Units

This is just the tip of the iceberg! So wish us luck and look forward to another overflowing issue of The Great Machine later in the month!





## The Face of the Enemy: The Xindi Revealed

By Tyrel Lohr

### Introduction

The Xindi made their first appearance in *Enterprise's* Season 2 finale, "The Expanse". In this episode, a prototype planet killer emerged above Earth, cutting a swath of destruction from Florida to Venezuela. The unprovoked attack left seven million dead and Earth reeling. It was Earth's first alien attack, and the reasons behind the weapon's launch were completely mysterious. The end of the episode saw *Enterprise* undergoing an extensive refit to her systems in preparation for a mission into the Delphic Expanse, a mysterious and anomaly ridden area of space as well as home to the Xindi.

As the story continued in Season 3, the *Enterprise* began its travails in the Expanse, visiting new worlds and making contact with new civilizations. It did not take long for their hunt for the Xindi to bear fruit. Over the course of their adventures they encountered the five surviving Xindi species: Primate, Arboreal, Aquatic, Insectoid and Reptilian. A sixth species, the Avians, did not survive the Xindi battle for supremacy and the destruction of their homeworld. The reaction to contact was mixed in most cases,

with the Xindi generally holding a great distrust of the Humans and their message of peace.

The Xindi attack on Earth had been launched on the pretext that Earth would be responsible for the destruction of their homeworld some 400 years in the future. The Xindi were given this future information from their Guardians, known to the crew of the *Enterprise* as the Sphere Builders, the transdimensional aliens responsible for the construction of the series of giant spherical structures located throughout the expanse. These spheres were in fact terraforming devices intended to destroy normal space, converting it into an environment inhabitable by the Sphere Builders themselves. The Sphere Builders, while acting under the guise of the Xindi Guardians, planned to use the Xindi as a pawn in their part of the Temporal Cold War.

The truth was finally revealed, but not before the Xindi Reptilians and Insectoids rebelled, stealing a full-size, planet-destroying model of the planet killer weapon and setting course for Earth. The weapon was (of course) destroyed before it could be used, ensuring the survival of Earth, and with it the hope of the United Federation of Planet's birth.

### Xindi History

*(Author's Note: The following historical information is taken from*

*the Memory Alpha Star Trek Wiki site - [http://www.memory-alpha.org/en/index.php/Xindi\\_History](http://www.memory-alpha.org/en/index.php/Xindi_History))*

Xindi history is long and troublesome; the Xindi have often been characterized by inter-species conflict.

### Civil War and Diaspora

For about a century, the different Xindi races fought for control of Xindus, their homeworld. At the end of this long war, the Xindi-Reptilians and the Xindi-Insectoids forged an alliance which resulted in the destruction of the planet, sometime during the 2030s. The Xindi-Avians were unable to evacuate when Xindus was destroyed. This began the era known to the Xindi as the Great Diaspora, as the various Xindi species that survived the destruction declared peace, and sought to work together to find and establish a new homeworld.

They were unable to settle on a new homeworld, however, spreading across several worlds in the Delphic Expanse including Azati Prime and others. It was around this time that the Xindi were first contacted by the transdimensional beings they dubbed the Guardians. The Guardians assisted the Xindi during the Diaspora, directing groups of refugees to appropriate planets and helping them avoid the dangers of the Expanse. The Guardians were responsible for the creation of the

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Xindi Council and kept it together during troubling times.

## The Human Threat

In 2140s the Guardians contacted the Xindi Council, informing them that in the 26th century humanity would destroy their new homeworld, thereby using the Xindi for their purposes in the Temporal Cold War. As a result, the Xindi began developing a planet-destroying weapon so they could wipe out Earth in a preemptive strike. A test strike against Earth in March 2153 resulted in the deaths of seven million people between Florida and Venezuela. Earth responded by sending the flagship of Starfleet, *Enterprise*, into the Delphic Expanse in order to find the Xindi and stop them from launching their final weapon.

When *Enterprise* arrived at Azati Prime in January 2154 after a long and harrowing search for the weapon, the information Captain Jonathan Archer brought rocked Xindi civilization to its core. He revealed that the Xindi “Guardians” were actually the same beings responsible for the construction of the spheres found all across the Delphic Expanse, and that they were using the spheres to alter space in our universe to conform to their dimension’s physical laws. They had foreseen that in the 26th century the United Federation of Planets would defeat their invasion force and were trying to stop this from happening by destroying Earth, using the Xindi. (ENT: “Azati Prime”)

Archer managed to convert Primate representative (and weapon designer) Degra to his cause, and with his help brought Arboreal representative Jannar and the other Primate on the Council to his side as well. The Aquatics remained on

the fence until Archer provided stronger evidence, and then provisionally sided with Archer’s cause. The Reptilian representative Commander Dolim as well as his insectoid colleague refused to accept Archer’s story and stole the weapon rather than let the Council delay the launch. Fortunately for Earth and the future, *Enterprise*, working with the Primates, Arboreals, and Aquatics, managed to stop the weapon from destroying Earth. *Enterprise* also destroyed the sphere network in the Delphic Expanse.

The Xindi expressed gratitude toward *Enterprise* for showing them the truth, though reunifying after the fractures Archer’s revelations had caused would be difficult.

## Converting the Xindi

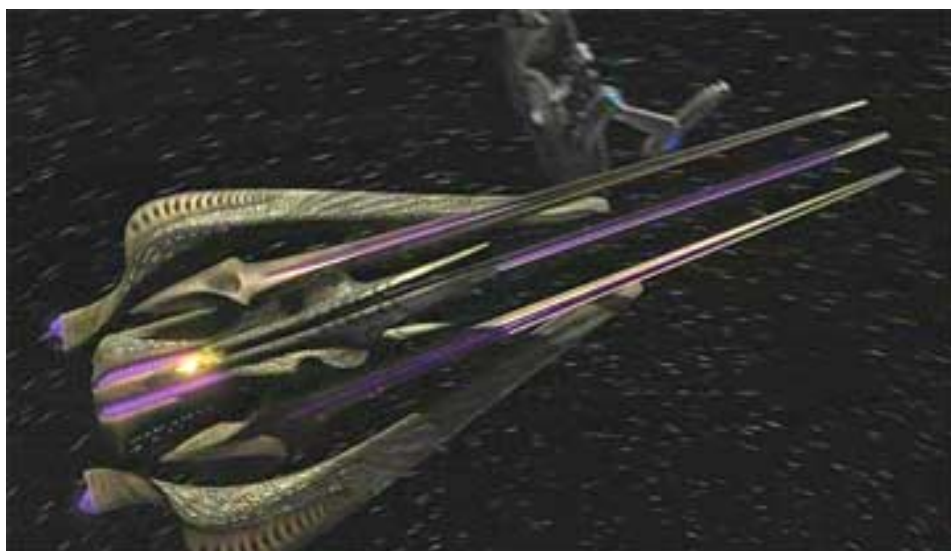
The biggest problem with converting any of the ships from the *Enterprise* time frame is keeping the older vessels interesting and competitive without making them incredibly more powerful than the ships from the Original Series period. Trying to balance such things as

Sensor ratings and shield values is especially difficult in these cases.

What do we know of Xindi starships and their weaponry? Some of the Xindi ships we do get to see quite a bit of, which provides a good set of CGI show evidence to refer back to. However, some of the ship meshes only appeared late in the series, and even then didn’t get all that much screen time. The aggressive members of the Xindi council – the Reptilians and Insectoids – get the most screen time, so their capabilities are perhaps the easiest to extrapolate.

One thing that *Enterprise*’s writers did that somewhat constrained my approach to the Xindi is that they gave them a mix of fairly advanced technologies not enjoyed by other powers of the era. The Xindi have better sensors than Earth, deflector shields instead of polarized hull plating, and have fully functional transport technology (though perhaps restricted in its deployment).

The problem then is how to get the Xindi to be portrayed as being better than Earth but less powerful than an interstellar power like the Vulcans or Klingons? It was difficult, I can say that!





This article will give you some insights as to the 'hows' and 'whys' of the Xindi conversions.

## Confessions and Preconceptions

I must begin by confessing that I did not watch all that many episodes this season. I tried liking the show, I really did. I watched the first several episodes in the season, but they were so non-engaging that I found myself either drifting off to work on the computer or turning it off completely. The Trip/T'Pol affair (literally) is what finally made me tune out. It was a desperate ratings grab, and I could see the writing on the wall.

Later on during the season I was hearing better reviews of the show, and decided to tune in and watch an episode, if nothing more than to make fun of it for a few laughs. The episode was "The Shipment", and it wasn't too bad. Highly predictable, but at least it did leave me with some questions. Who was Degra? What was going on with the show since I was gone? For the first time, I actually had *missed* something by not watching a few episodes (seasons?) of a Star Trek show. Gasp!

I made it a point to watch the last episodes of the season, just to see whether they were able to pull it off or not. It was middling, with some definite strong points, and I do have to award points to the *Enterprise* writers and crew for at least trying something different. I liked the premise of the Xindi, and think they did a very good job of adding CGI aliens (something rarely done on Star Trek, outside sexually frustrated gas clouds) on a budget and keeping things interesting.

Overall I think the Xindi's only major failings was in how the whole "super weapon Death Star" idea was handled. It often came off very cliché to have the "bad guys" building a "super weapon" to destroy the Earth. Some other kind of crisis would have been better, though I can't think of anything right off the top of my head. The super weapon was meant to add urgency to the heroes' plight, but it came across as goofy when you had the Xindi producing so many weapons prototypes and demonstrating them often enough to give their intended victims time to respond and foil their plans.

## Ship Sizes

In rough visual comparisons

of the Xindi units as they relate to existing *Enterprise* starships, very few of them seem to be larger than the NX class herself. In fact, it almost seems as if the show went to great pains to keep the cruiser vessels very much on par with one another. Because of this perceived size proximity, most Xindi ships are medium ships and have a ramming factor very close to that of *Enterprise*.

The one ship which doesn't fit this mold is the mothership craft operated by the Xindi Aquatics. This behemoth has been estimated by the Ex Astris Scientia website as being about two kilometers in length and, given that the ship can berth the NX comfortably in its hangar, I tend to agree with this estimation. This ship is probably the hardest ship to translate into the conversion, simply because it is several times larger than even the ships fielded in the TNG era! So, of all of the Xindi ships, the Aquatic mothership is one which will certainly cause some squabbles and debate.

The remaining frigates and light ships were made into a mix of light combat vessels and fighters/shuttles, as dictated by their size and dimensions.



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## Sensor Technology

As Xindi sensor technology was stated in dialogue as being superior to those operated by the *Enterprise*, I knew that all of the major Xindi craft would need to have a higher EW rating than that of the NX War Cruiser. However, I still did not want the Xindi to have better sensors than the Vulcans.

My final decision in regards to sensors was to give the Xindi sensor ratings in the 5 to 6 range (with the Aquatic mothership slightly higher at 7), but limit them to Antiquated Sensors. This actually worked out fairly well, as the Xindi ships could then use weapons with high power requirements, such as the particle cannon, without fear of power abuse.

## Engine Technology

Setting speeds and maneuvering capabilities for ships is always difficult, largely because the screen evidence varies so much from episode to episode, often because of the demands of the plot. The speed and thrust values on the main Xindi warships vary, but were for the large part set so that they would be similar to that of *Enterprise*. Given that I had only foggy memories and one recorded episode's worth of CGI effects to refer to, some of these speed values may not seem to match the screen evidence. Vessels that seemed to hang back in battle and fight in more of a supporting role were made slower and less maneuverable than the noticeably nimbler skirmish units.

Each Xindi faction's ships handle differently. The Xindi Insectoids and Reptilians tend to build faster, more maneuverable ships. Meanwhile, the Xindi Arboreals and Primate cruisers are



more ponderous, notably exhibiting poorer turn rates. The Xindi Aquatics have a mix of abilities, depending on the size and mission of the ship and tend to be more "middle of the road" in their maneuvering stats.

One ship of note when it comes to engine capabilities, and a running theme found throughout many of the older *Enterprise* era starships, is the Xindi Primate Forlorthan Cruiser. This ship is supposed to be one of the fastest ships in the Xindi fleet, so I knew I had to make it fast. At the same time, I had decided I wanted a complement of four light particle cannons as the ship's primary weapons suite. Having a fast ship with that many weapons onboard would not be a good combination, especially considering the free power that a light particle cannon generates when deactivated. So I set the free thrust on the Forlorthan to a very low value (5 thrust!) and compensated by giving it a slightly improved engine efficiency value. This means that, by shutting down half of its light particle cannons, the Forlorthan can attain the speeds that it needs to match dialogue evidence.

## Shield Technology

The fact that the Xindi

already had deflector shields shouldn't come as a surprise to most people. In *Enterprise*, it seems that everyone except Earth is using this more advanced defense system. In the conversion I have extended polarized hull plating technology to include both Tellarite and older Andorian ships, but in the actual *Trek* canon it is anyone's guess what is correct this week.

I originally toyed with the idea of giving the Xindi less capable deflector shields, "early deflector shields" if you will, with a poor energy to regeneration rate. This idea was thrown out as being unnecessary and better reserved for some of the thousand year old Vulcan and Romulan craft that will undoubtedly show up at some point.

Having decided that they would use standard deflector shielding, I had to ascertain what kind of shield strength would befit the Xindi. In order to be suitably effective against Earth and Vulcan ships of the period it would have to be fairly strong, but still not as strong as some of the early TOS conversions. The fact that the Xindi all seemed to be using medium ship sized cruisers gave me some leeway, thankfully. I opted for a median value of 15 for most of the Xindi shield projection values, with some ships enjoying



better shielding than others do. In practice this means that the Xindi are capable of accepting one or two weapon hits before damage begins affecting their ship. This gives them a distinct advantage when compared to Terran ships like the NX which will almost always take damage from enemy fire, even if their polarized hull plating is bolstered.

## Armor Technology

The decision to give the Xindi heavier armor than other ships of the period was a difficult one, but in the end I opted to do so for reasons of resiliency and durability. I decided that the Xindi ships I saw on the series all seemed to be taking more damage than was commensurate with their size. Most Xindi ships have a 4 armor on their structure blocks, though not all Xindi ships are able to boast of this advantage.

## Insectoid C&C's

The Xindi Insectoid ships of medium size and larger all have two equal sized C&C systems in much the same way as the Pak'ma'ra. I

decided to do this because the Insectoid ships were supposed to possess a more diversified command and control structure which made it difficult to knock out the nerve centers of the ship. All Xindi Insectoid ships with this dual C&C arrangement do not lose control from the loss of C&C systems until both C&C's are destroyed.

## Weapon Technology

The weapons of the Xindi races were the hardest to compile. In some cases stock weapons would do. Old weapons from the period include particle cannons and beams, such as those used by the Andorians, and plasma drills, a previously singular Romulan accomplishment. I felt that both of these sets of weapons were a comfortable fit for the Xindi.

The fact remained, though, that I did not want the Xindi to be a "one trick pony" that existed as a whole slew of variations on a single theme. It is true that you can get a lot of mileage out of ships operating

the same set of weaponry, but for five distinct sub-groups? No, some variation was required in order to get the right "feel" for the Xindi fleets.

## Particle Cannons and Particle Beams

Basic particle weaponry is the mainstay of the Xindi arsenal. Most Xindi vessels are equipped with some form of particle beam or cannon. In fact, the early particle beam is the primary defensive weapon in the fleet.

## Light Plasma Drill

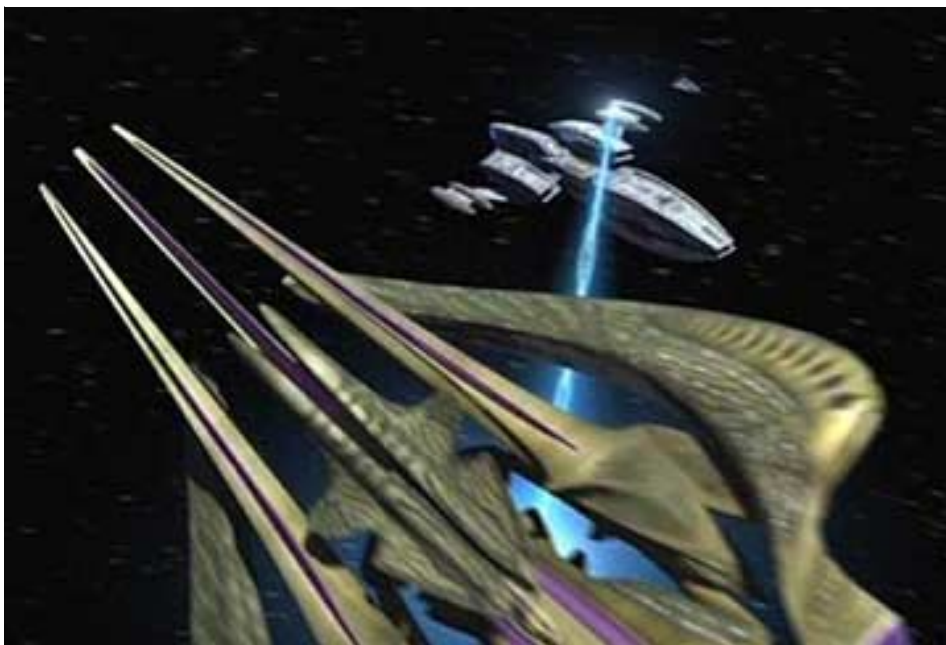
The obligatory Xindi plasma weapon, the light plasma drill was added to the Xindi Reptilian and Insectoid vessels as a way to match some of my sources which indicated that the Xindi ships used some sort of short-range plasma weapon. The Romulan plasma drill series seemed to fit the bill fine, and so I allowed the Xindi to "borrow" the lightest model as a light weapon on some of their ships.

The primary disadvantage to the light plasma drill is that it scores no overkill. This is because the plasma drill family of weaponry actually scores damage in piercing mode (not standard), where overkill is lost. In the case of the light plasma drill, it doesn't have the potency to actually burn through the ship's hull like the more advanced models do, which is represented by the no overkill addition to its rules.

Full information on the light plasma drill will appear along with Romulan War units in a future issue of *The Great Machine*.

## Shearing Particle Beams

The shearing particle beam and shearing particle beam accelerator were created as a take



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off on the standard particle cannon. These types of weapons can be found on both Insectoid and Primate ships. Neither weapon is as powerful as a full-fledge particle cannon, but they do have their advantages. A slightly smaller rake size means that damage will be more spread around, increasing the chance of taking out ship systems, while the excellent fire control means that the shearing particle beam is extremely accurate, even at range.

The reason for the invention of an accelerated version of the shearing particle beam was the Xindi Primate Teckur Armed Courier, the class of vessel flown by Degra. With only a single beam weapon, that ship would have been dead meat in a firefight unless it could fire every single turn. But giving it a single early particle beam would have not been effective at all. So the answer was a version of the shearing particle beam that could fire in a one-turn mode for less damage. Problem solved!

## Small Ballistic Torpedo

Ah, the wonders of either a) missing most of the season or b) poor starship continuity. When watching the Season 3 finale episode, the Andorian crew mentioned that the Reptilians were firing *torpedoes* at them! I didn't remember any other mention of torpedoes in prior episodes, thus the original Xindi Reptilian Tark'ha Attack Cruiser was not equipped with any.

Now, at that point I had to hit the drawing board and determine how I would handle these torpedoes. Should I simulate them with Class-SO Missile Racks, as was the case with the NX? No, that would not have given the right flavor to me. Photons were also out of the question, as I desperately want to keep them out of the hands of non-Klingon interlopers for as long as I can (the Vulcans withstanding; I wish I didn't have to give them any, too).

Ultimately I decided that a knocked down version of the ballistic torpedo was in order. That advanced Centauri weapon ("advanced" being used sarcastically in this case) would provide the right mix of range, firepower, and versatility for a group as advanced as the Xindi but not as advanced as the Vulcans or Klingons.

All of the normal rules that apply to the ballistic torpedo apply to the small ballistic torpedo. The only functional difference is that the small ballistic torpedo only holds three shots, not six. The rules for torpedo saturation still applies to small ballistic torpedoes, which is important to remember when flying Xindi ships armed with torpedoes.

At present, only the Xindi Reptilian and Primate cruisers have been equipped with small ballistic torpedoes.

## Antimatter Torpedo

Where did *that* come from, you ask? In doing research for the Xindi Aquatics, one fan site listed their smaller patrol ship as being equipped with an antimatter torpedo system. Upon seeing this information I just shrugged and said "sure, why not." The antimatter torpedo from the B5 universe isn't that great of a weapon, just ask the Vree! Thus its inclusion on these primitive Xindi ships was not too overpowered.

The weapon is exactly the same as the B5 incarnation of the antimatter torpedo and is used only by the Xindi Aquatics.

## Projection Beams

The Xindi Arboreals, for a lack of a better weapon system, received projection beams as their special weapon set. Again, the projection beams are another low-tech competitor to the particle cannon series of weapons. They score damage in raking mode and are very similar to particle cannon and phase cannon weaponry (dangerously close, in some cases).

One of the reasons for this peculiarly proprietary weaponry for the Arboreals is it seemed in one episode like their weapons were different somehow from those operated by the other Xindi factions. Their nose-mounted gun in particular seemed to fire for a slightly longer duration, or at least have a little bit more of an effect upon a successful hit. I created the heavy projection beam to fit this concept. The weapon is capable of sustained fire (something that is fairly advanced for the





time), and the damage on the weapon is similarly improved over weapons fielded by other powers. The rate of fire is a little slow, but this is made up for through the use of the sustained feature.

## The Xindi Fleet

Included with this issue of The Great Machine are the major Xindi units that appeared in the series. Other units, including fighters, shuttles and other variants, can be found on the Planetside website ([planetside.firenebula.com](http://planetside.firenebula.com)).

### Qqu'chi'uch Frigate

**Base Hull (Unlimited Deployment)**

**Xindi Insectoid**

**Medium Ship**

Less powerful than the cruisers operated by the other four Xindi factions, the Qqu'chi'uch is still a formidable warship. The Qqu'chi'uch Frigate trades survivability for both firepower and economy. As a result, the Xindi Insectoids field large numbers of Qqu'chi'uch, defeating relative quality with quantity.

### Omnu Cruiser

**Base Hull (Unlimited Deployment)**

**Xindi Arboreal**

**Medium Ship**

The Omnu Cruiser is the largest cruiser class vessel operated by the Xindi Arboreals. A showcase for all their best technologies, the Omnu is a fearsome fighting vessel. Unfortunately, the Xindi Reptilian and Insectoid ships are still a clear match in firepower for the Omnu.

This cruiser's major advantage is in its ability to perform fast turns, allowing it to keep its sustained-firing heavy projection beam in arc of the opponent.

## Forlorthan Cruiser

**Base Hull (Unlimited Deployment)**

**Xindi Primate**

**Medium Ship**

The Xindi Primates rely on the Forlorthan Cruiser as a long-range patrol ship, ensuring the security of Xindi territories. The Forlorthan is faster than any ship in the fleet, capable of traversing greater distances faster by virtue of its advanced warp drive and portal generator.

In terms of firepower, the Forlorthan Cruiser is one of the strongest warships fielded by the Xindi. Its array of short-range particle weapons and torpedoes allows it batter enemy ships with ease. The one failing of the design is that it is power starved, and a Forlorthan captain must make a decision whether to run his/her weapons at full strength or else deactivate weapons to gain additional thrust for the sake of mobility.

The Forlorthan is the first Xindi ship to make use of a four-deflector shield system. Although individually weaker and less resilient to battle damage than other Xindi shield systems, the deflectors on the Forlorthan are equally harder to take out, ensuring systems redundancy in combat.







## Teckur Armed Courier

**Base Hull (Unlimited Deployment)**

**Xindi Primate**

**Light Combat Vessel**

These heavily upgraded Kuo'zi'qhi Cargo Couriers are commonly used by the Xindi Humanoids as their primary priority transport vessels. Strategically, the Teckur is faster than almost any other ship in the Xindi fleet. This allows for emergency supplies or information to be conveyed within the Xindi dominion.

Despite being a variant of the Kuo'zi'qhi, the version in Xindi Humanoid service is considered its own base hull as it is not natively available to the Xindi Insectoids.

## Li'sar Mansir Mothership

**Base Hull (Limited Availability 33%)**

**Xindi Aquatic**

**Capital Ship**

The largest ship class built by the Xindi at the time of the conflict, the Li'sar Mansir Mothership is the pinnacle of Xindi Aquatic ship construction. The Li'sar Mansir dwarfs all other Xindi ships. In fact, the Mothership's large, spacious interior hangar can comfortably berth most Xindi starships. The size of the Li'sar Mansir is largely dictated by the demands of her crew. The interior environment of the Li'sar Mansir is filled with water, allowing the Xindi Aquatics to operate in normal surroundings rather than relying on cumbersome environmental suits or vehicles.

The Li'sar Mansir also has the distinction of

being the best armed of the Xindi ships. A veritable battleship, the ships of even the Vulcan and Andorian navies pale in comparison to the sheer firepower a Mothership can bring to bear.

It is not surprising that the cost to build and operation Li'sar Mansir Motherships is extremely high, and the Xindi Aquatics have only a limited quantity in service at any one time.

## Tark'Ha Attack Cruiser

**Base Hull (Unlimited Deployment)**

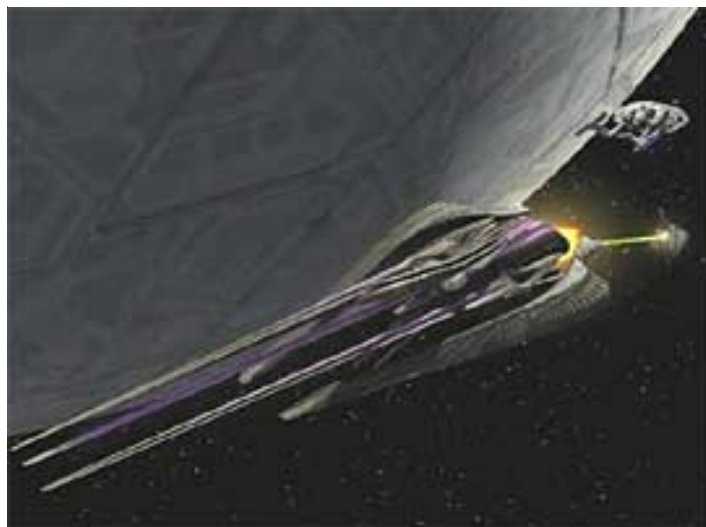
**Xindi Reptilian**

**Medium Ship**

The Tark'Ha Attack Cruiser is a potent combat ship, and the epitome of Xindi Reptilian power and prestige. The Tark'Ha follows a highly stylized design pattern, which stands in contrast to the designs operated by most of the other Xindi factions.

The Tark'Ha's main weapon is a wide-arc particle cannon. This heavy weapon can fire into most any arc, making it difficult to outflank a competent Reptilian captain. A mix of secondary weapons, including plasma drills and particle beams, round out the Reptilian arsenal.

The Xindi Reptilians operate several variants of the Tark'Ha hull, relying on its almost exclusively for their fleet.



## Using the Xindi in Pick-Up Games

Whenever a player opts to play as the Xindi, the player can choose to either play as a single Xindi

faction (example: Reptilians) or they can instead choose to field a unified Xindi fleet.

If the player opts for a unified fleet, he/she should choose ONE Xindi faction as the primary faction within the fleet. This will be the principle Xindi race represented by the force. 33% of the point value total in the scenario must be spent on ships from the primary Xindi faction.

## Enterprise Era Playtest Rules

When developing ships for the Enterprise era, it has been very difficult to show a real distinction between technological sophistication of ships from the 2150 and 2260 periods. During the process of putting together the Xindi (as well as doing further work on the Romulan War vessels), I came to the conclusion that a few modifications might be needed to make the use of power more important than it currently is.

Some of the following rules may already exist in the Star Trek Conversion rules document (which will be updated in the coming month with new rules information), but I am

including them here for purposes of clarity.

### Increasing Shield Projection Capacity

Ships are allowed to increase the capacity of their shield projections by 1 per point of power applied. Shields can only be improved in this manner to a maximum of twice the projection's normal capacity. The decision to increase the capacity of a shield using power is made before deflector shields regenerate shield projections.

This allows Star Trek ships to shutdown systems in order to increase the capacity of their shield projections, allowing them to absorb ever larger amounts of damage before the projection fails. Power used to increase the projection's capacity does NOT act to replenish or regenerate the shield projection in any way. If the power being used to increase the capacity of a shield projection is no longer applied to the shield projection, reduce the capacity of the projection back to its normal, unmodified levels.

*Example: A Xindi Forlorthan Cruiser is locked in a heated standoff*

*with an Andorian warship. The Xindi Primate captain, not wishing to provoke the overzealous Andorians, shuts down all of her light particle cannons, generating an extra 20 power. 16 power is redirected into the forward shield projection while the remaining 4 power is used to increase the regeneration ability of the two deflector shield systems. At the end of the Power Segment, the Forlorthan would now have a 32-point forward shield projection with 24 points of absorption capacity available.*

*Note: This rule supercedes 2.2.8 Increasing the Capacity of Shield Projections found in the main conversion rules. Playtesting would be appreciated to see if the 1:1 power to capacity ratio is unbalanced.*

### Warp Engine Power Generation

For each ship, take the number of structure boxes in each warp engine and divide by 5; this is the amount of power that each warp engine generates. The power generated by warp nacelles is not extra power, but instead represents the amount of power that the warp



# Grey 17 is Missing

engines themselves generate. For every 5 boxes (round up) of damage scored on a warp engine a -1 power loss is incurred on the ship. If an entire warp engine is destroyed, then all power that warp engine produced is lost.

Note that playing with this optional rule makes warp engines much more important targets and increase the chance of crippling a ship once its warp engines are destroyed, which is fairly easy considering that most ships have their warp engines located on the aft structure block. The system does, however, reflect a greater resilience to warp engine damage for ships with multiple warp engines, which for many may better reflect the feel of the Star Trek universe.

## Alternate Warp Engine Power Generation

Some players may want them warp engines to generate extra power instead of providing power used in normal generations. If this is the case, each warp engine will produce +1 extra power per 5 boxes of warp engine structure (round up). As with the normal Warp Engine Power Generation rules, every 5 boxes (round up) of warp engine damage incurs a -1 power loss.

Having the warp engines produce extra power can be unbalancing. For instance, a Galaxy Command Ship would generate a whopping 16 extra power from its warp engines! If these alternate rules are in play, a surcharge is added to the cost of a unit equal to

15 times the amount of extra power generated by its warp engines. So, in the case of the Galaxy above, the player would have to add 240 points to the cost of the ship, giving a final cost of 1190 combat points.

The advantage to using this alternate rule is that all Star Trek ships will have extra power to play with, allowing them to increase the strength of their shields, cover power deficiencies, and sustain weapons. In many ways it may act to better reflect certain abilities we have witnessed on the different series.

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# Dune Wars

## Part 3

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### The Spice Must Flow: Dune Wars Continued

*By Christian Meador*

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The last part of our discussion of the universe of the Million worlds details some of the lesser-known factions. While important in their own right, they have a less prominent role to play in the books, with the exception of the Fremen. The Fremen are put here due to their lack of political power in the days prior to the ascension of Paul Maud'dib, and they would be considered a minor faction even then in terms of space power, the focus of this article.

We will also discuss some of the advanced weapons systems that are weaving their way past Guild interests, and discuss the full powers of Prescience of the mighty Kwizatz Haderach.

So without ado let us continue our examination of the Minor Factions!

### The Fremen

The descendants of the Zensunni wanderers, whose epic tale of forced migration at the hands of the Corrino Emperor has become the stuff of legend, the Fremen have been vastly underestimated over the years. The combination of the harsh survival requirements of Arrakis and their focused strength of will dominated by Zensunni doctrine has made for the most formidable race of humans in the Imperium. Little was known of their capabilities until their might was unleashed by Paul Maud'dib against the Emperor and his Harkonnen lackies.

**Allies:** House Atreides

**Enemies:** House Harkonnen

*“The Fremen must return to his original faith, to his genius in forming human communities; he must return to the past, were that lesson of survival was learned in the struggle on Arrakis. The only business of the Fremen should be that of opening his soul to the inner teachings. The worlds of the Imperium, the Landsraad and the CHOAM Confederacy have no message to give him. They will only rob him of his soul.”*

**The Preacher at Arrakeen**

### Fremen Troops

The Fremen are the most fearsome warriors in the universe, with little regard for life or death. Their own potent talents were reinforced further by the knowledge of Atreides Battle Tactics that Paul Maud'dib provided them. The end

# Grey 17 is Missing

result was the Feydaken, the Fremen Death Commandos. When finally unleashed against the Imperium they swept all from their path.

Fremen Feydaken are -2 on boarding actions, and +2 on all marine missions. For purposes of capturing ships, they inflict wounds on a 5-10, and take them only on a 7-10. In addition, Feydaken are by definition the best troops in any encounter. All bonuses for any other troop type are nullified when fighting the Feydaken. Feydaken cost 18 points per marine contingent.

## Fremen Fleets

In the early years the Fremen have no standing navy. In the days of Maud'dib's Jihad they used commandeered Guild and House ships, which were normally commanded but not crewed by the Fremen. The Fremen soldiers often act as marine contingents among aligned fleets, particularly in assault cruisers, assault lighters, and breaching pods.

However, at the height of the Jihad the Fremen forces so commonly pressed into service one type of modified transport used as a military troopship that it was often considered to be a type of Fremen vessel, though most of the naval crew on board were from other worlds.

### **Fremen Assault Transport**

Taken from a modification of design specifications of a standard Modulon Ore Transport, Fremen Assault Transports weren't created until the rise of Maud'dib. They differ from the role of the Sardaukar Corvettes in that their primary function is to land ground troops on planets, and they consider any other goal tertiary. By the time of their

peak most planets were too intimidated by the Fremen to effectively resist, with most space defenses being done only by the foolhardy. This caused relatively little problems with capital ships, though planetary fighters became an issue. The new Class-D defensive missile system showed its worth in trials and soon became the standard on the new generation invasion craft.

The Assault Transport itself is a dichotomy. While the new missiles and Matter Cannons were state of the art technology, the hull itself was a rather uninspired older design that was chosen for its ability to be mass-produced. The end result was a strong ship that became ubiquitous throughout space, but if any faction had ever been able to challenge Maud'dib in space things have might have gone quite differently indeed. Still, it was adequate for its job, and once the Fremen had landed on your planet their warrior skills proved to be far more than adequate.

### **Jihad Assault Shuttle**

A common sight descending from the heavens during the Jihad, the Assault Shuttle was powerful and quite capable of fighting its way to its destination. A generation of Fremen went to space behind the consoles of this versatile shuttle, and quite a few made a name for themselves. A Fremen may choose expert Redline Pilots (per the Cascor rules) for the Jihad Assault Shuttle only.

## Leadership

Expert Motivator  
Expert Coordinator  
Expert Pilot  
Expert Redline Pilot (per Cascor)  
(Assault Shuttles only)





Expert Security Officer  
Expert Breaching Officer  
Expert Warrior (per Drazzi)

Fremen Baraka  
Fremen Naib

## Fremen Baraka

A fremen Zensunni holy man, often attributed holy powers due to their direct connection with a higher level of existence. The presence of a Fremen Baraka is considered a great honor, and focuses the religious fervor of all Fremen on board. The Baraka has the following abilities:

- (1) the ship that the Baraka is on gains +4 initiative
- (2) the ship that the Baraka is on increases its profile by 1
- (3) the ship may ignore safety considerations in weapons recharge times. Any weapon may decrease its Rate of Fire by 1, but must pay the additional energy necessary to charge it in one turn less. So if the weapon had a one every two turns rate of fire and required 5 energy per turn, it would fire as a one shot every turn weapon but require an additional

5 points of energy to arm. At the end of the turn the weapon fires it must then make a critical roll at +6, and spend one turn cooling off before the arming cycle can begin again.

(4) Ramming is always allowed for all Fremen units or allies in a scenario that includes a Fremen Baraka. Note that this automatically gains the Fremen a +1 modifier to boarding attempts.

Location: C&C  
Cost: 40% the ships' value

## Fremen Naib

The term Naib is literally translated as one who pledges his life for the others of his tribe, and it has become the traditional appellation of Fremen Tribal leaders. A Naib is known as much for his wisdom as his battle acumen, and a true Naib's presence can have a dramatic affect on battles.

- (1) All ships in the Fremen fleet and her allies gain +1 to their initiatives
- (2) All critical hits caused by the ship the Naib is on add +2 to their die rolls

(3) He can taunt enemy ships, giving them a +1 bonus to attack his ship and a -1 penalty to attack any others in the Naib's fleet.

(4) He can focus his wrath against any 1 enemy unit. All Fremen ships and allies gain a +1 to hit and +1 per damage die against that target.

(5) He can join a marine contingent or breaching pod, and acts as an Expert Breaching Officer in all ways.

(6) The Fremen Naib invokes great devotion from his crew. Any Fremen Expert officer on board the Naib's ship that is killed in combat returns to duty after 1 round and continues as if unaffected. Only at the end of the combat will they allow themselves to die.

Location: C%  
Cost: 50% the ships value

## The Machine Culture of Ix

*“Progress and profit require a substantial investment in personnel, equipment, and capital funding. However, the resource most often overlooked, yet which can often provide the greatest payoff, is an investment in time.”*

**Dominic Vernius,  
The Secret Workings of IX.**

The artificers and machinists of the Imperium, the House of Ix has shown itself to be complacent with its place in the social hierarchy. However, despite their relative lack of ambition compared to other powers, personal matters and the manipulations of other Great Houses



# Grey 17 is Missing

have conspired in the recent past to wrest control of Ix from its hereditary nobility. In large part due to fears of Ix violating the Great Proscriptures and creating a machine in the image of the mind of a man, Ix has proven vulnerable to other political factions and is not considered one of the Great Houses.

However, those who would have truck with their enemies should be reminded of where the masters of the machines reside. House Ix has been caught off-guard by their enemies in the past. They have no intention of allowing it to happen again.

**Allies:** Atreides

**Enemies:** Bene Tleixalu, CHOAM

## Ixian Troops

Ixian ground troops proved to be no match for the Bene Tleixalu assault on their homeworld. However many forces would have had difficulty with a surprise attack by Face Dancers combined with an uprising of their underclass. Ixian troops have no modifiers to marine actions, and cost 10 points per unit.

## Ixian Fleets

In the past Ixian defenses were limited to a few shielded cutters and various defense lighters, as the Ixians believed that their role as manufacturer to the Imperium and the nature of their subterranean home would protect them. They have since learned the error of their ways.

After the Atreides crusade to reclaim the Ixian homeworld for its noble masters, the Ixians have kept more of their products for themselves instead of selling them to the highest bidder. The Ixian Fleet has one great strength that has been revealed to no one outside of their



inner circles; Ixian ships have been upgraded with expert computer systems to resolve their sensor array issues. For a cost of 10% of the ships value, you can upgrade their sensors from antiquated to normal, allowing them to buy extra EW points as normal. The Ixians will reveal this modification only in the direst of circumstances, as their connection with the creation of proscribed machines could easily restart the Jihad against Ix.

### *Ixian Overseer Scout Destroyer*

The ultimate expression of Ixian design, the Overseer is the only ELINT vessel in the Million Worlds outside the clutches of the Spacing Guild. Crammed full of electronics and integrated into various expert systems, the Overseer is a ship shrouded in secrecy. Currently the few Overseers that have been manufactured are stationed in Ix space, monitoring the comings and goings of ships from the Great

Heighliners. After the betrayal of the Guild in the attack on Ix by the Bene Tleixalu, the Lords of Ix authorized the production of the Scout Destroyer. While they may still have to do business with the Guild, the powers that be at Ix have determined to never again trust them.

Should Ix be thrown into another war they have decided to make any approaching fleet pay for their temerity. The electronic warfare capabilities of the Overseer are the first line of defense in any new battle, and a very impressive edge compared to the capabilities of the House fleets.

## Leadership

The Ixian Fleet can buy the following Expert characters at normal cost:

Expert Engineer  
Expert Technician  
Expert Elint Officer  
Expert Electrician  
Expert Shield Technician  
Ixian Shipwright

## Ixian Shipwright

A master builder of Ixian contrivances, the Ixian Shipwright knows the ins and outs of the various vessels he builds as only a proud parent could. Having an Ixian Shipwright on board has several advantages:

- (1) All criticals against the ship the Shipwright inhabits are at -4 to the die roll.
- (2) Overthrusting criticals are at -2 to the die roll.
- (3) Engine Efficiency is shifted down one level. For example, an efficiency of 3 points of power for every point of thrust is changed to 2 points of power for every point of thrust.

(4) He not only knows how to make them, he knows how to break them. Choose one hull type of ship. All damage against that hull type adds +1 to each die rolled. Note that this includes variants of a basic hull type design.

Location: Reactor

Cost: 25% of the ship's value.

## C.H.O.A.M (Combine Honnete Ober Advancer

*“Melange is the financial crux of CHOAM activities. Without this spice, Bene Gesserit Reverend Mothers could not perform feats of observation and human control, Guild Navigators could not see safe pathways across space, and billions of Imperial citizens would die of addictive withdrawal. Any simpleton knows that such dependence upon a single commodity leads to abuse. We are all at risk.”*

### CHOAM Economic Analysis of Materiel Flow Patterns

## Mercantiles)

A conglomeration of the great Merchantile Houses of the Imperium, CHOAM is a subtle and often overlooked player in the ebb and flow of power in the Million Worlds. CHOAM like most economic entities primarily desires stability and the continuation of the status quo, as this ensures their continued dominance in their chosen realm. However, in an economy dominated by the distribution of the spice Melange, even the great wealth of the members of CHOAM can be affected by the whirls and

upheavals of the Spice trade.

**Allies:** House Ordos

**Enemies:** Spice Smugglers

## CHOAM Troops

CHOAM rarely involves itself directly in any ground war, though they retain security forces and mercenaries to watch out for their interests. CHOAM marine contingents cost 10 points, and have no bonuses.

## CHOAM Fleet

The Inspection fleet of CHOAM is supposed to be limited to system defense and tariff enforcement, but has grown to reach far beyond those dictates. Enormous shielded monitors can be employed to inter entire star systems, and the reach of CHOAM customs ships pervades the Imperium. To this point the excesses of the CHOAM Inspection fleet has been overlooked primarily because of the economic might of the houses CHOAM represents, and the fact that they have backed down during their minor conflicts over the years with the Great Houses. This is in large part due to the political factionalism within CHOAM itself, and the fact that so often the divergent groups within the mercantile alliance pull it in different directions. However House Mentats have long since calculated that should CHOAM unite over any one issue, their fleet would be the equal of any great house – and their holdings would be greater than any one other faction.

## Shielded Monitor

The original Monitor design, it has come into some disfavor after Mentat risk analysis showed the danger of utilizing a Holtzman shield generator on such a large vessel.



This point was further proven during a skirmish at Moreno III, when a House Ordos Monitor was extensively damaged by several smuggler vessels due to the Lasgun-Shield reaction. Still, the design has spread to many house navies, and the CHOAM inspector fleet can call on several for blockade purposes during times of trade war.

The Shielded Monitor has several design differences to the later armored Monitor. Whereas the Armored Monitor carried a large suite of Heavy Lasguns, the Shielded Monitor bypasses any potential reaction by adding a long range Missile battery and three Medium Railguns for moderate range encounters. While less heavily armored, the shield generators make the Monitor all but impervious to fighter attacks, and the suite of Vulcan railguns that later Monitors possess for defensive purposes retain the heavier Gauss cannons that the original models used against larger ships.



# Grey 17 is Missing

The Shielded Monitor is quite a dangerous vessel. Against an opponent without Lasgun support, its ability to shrug off damage and respond in kind makes it the center point of any CHOAM or House conflict. But against a foe bringing Lasguns to the fore, it is an extremely risky choice, and in most cases once a Lasgun has been sighted on the battlefield the Shielded Monitor is forced to turn off its Holtzman generators. This transforms it from the dominant force on the battleground to an adequate but not overly effective weapons platform.

*Note: House Atreides, Corrino, Harkonnen, and Ordos may take a shielded monitor as a rare variant with a 10% increase in cost. For CHOAM fleets it is considered a common design and has no surcharge.*

## Leadership

A CHOAM fleet may purchase the following Expert officers at normal cost:

Expert Helmsman  
Expert Scanner  
Expert Quartermaster  
Expert Coordinator  
CHOAM Financier

## CHOAM Financier

This ship has attracted the interest of one of the major mercantile houses inside CHOAM, and has been granted a Financier in order to ensure the crew has the best of everything available to them. The CHOAM Financier has the following effects on the ship:

(1) An Expert Technician is added to the ship at no extra cost. Note that due to the limits in place against the Machine Culture in the Imperium, the Expert Technician

is not normally available to CHOAM forces. A CHOAM force can only take an Expert Technician if he accompanies a CHOAM Financier (who monopolizes the talents of the few Technicians that have avoided the purges) or if they are a political ally of a faction that makes Technicians available.

(2) Sensors on the ships are upgraded with the latest detection suites. Any ship a Financier is present on is treated as having normal Sensors instead of the usual Dune Wars antiquated Sensors.

(3) Costs for shuttle bay conversions are reduced by 33%

(4) Costs for non-standard missiles are reduced by 33%

(5) The ship counts double its normal cost for Logistics and supply, but also doubles the speed of repairs in a campaign setting.

(6) A CHOAM Financier has the financial backing to work his way through the Spacing Guilds loopholes and redtape. For 100 BPV at the beginning of a scenario he may nullify the ability of a Guild Functionary to negate a CHOAM ally from joining the faction.

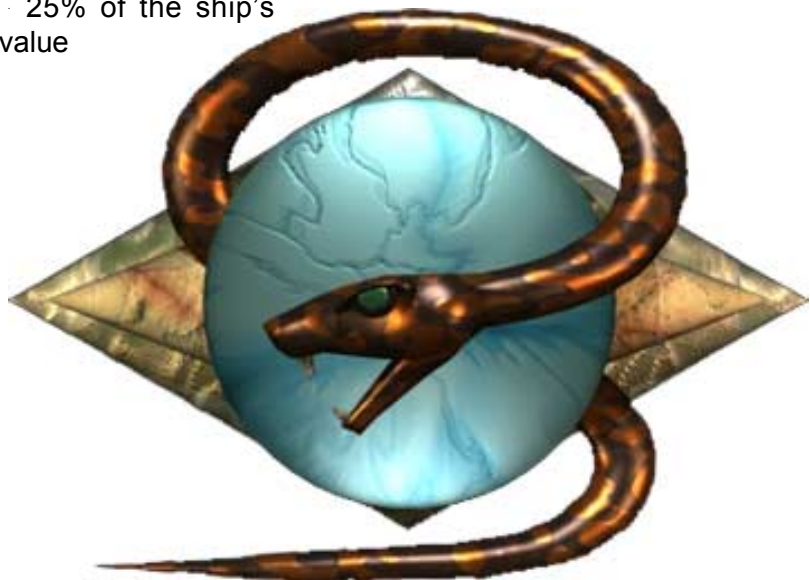
Location: C&C

Cost: 25% of the ship's base value

## House Ordos

House Ordos is one of the most mysterious of the great Houses. Run by a cartel of businessmen from the ice planet of Draconis IV, Ordos has managed to keep the identities of those who run the cartel secret from even those lucky enough to be stockholders in the House. Intrigue and espionage are the watchwords of the day in Ordos, and the ability to keep informed and aware of the politics of domination in the House are absolutely critical to the members continued survival among the constantly changing politics.

The Cartel has managed to gain influence in many business ventures, even though the House has relatively few direct investments. However, their ability to control the process of business and their expertise in influencing and managing outside investments are impressive. House Ordos also is known to be a shrewd and calculating organization, and their amoral point of reference means that they can act with ethical flexibility. Penetrating business practices, cunning intrigue and even overt





conflict are all employed on a regular basis among the House. When they choose to engage physical force during their dealings House Ordos is known for its mastery of ballistic weaponry, and the House Ordos Missile Cruiser is renowned for its complicated and multi-tiered missile suites. Expert Quartermasters often provide House Ordos with superior weapons load outs, and their famed Deviator missiles can create many dangers for enemy crews as the chemical and psychological weapons cause many unusual problems for crew integrity.

**Allies:** CHOAM

**Enemies:** Spice Smugglers

## Ordos Troops

House Ordos troops are competent, but not exceptional. They add +1 on attempts to rescue hostages or take hostages, but have no other modifiers. They cost 11 points per unit.

## House Ordos Fleet

The Ordos fleet is respected among the major houses, and the ballistic heavy doctrine they utilize causes a great deal of consternation for most adversaries. The main weapon utilized by the Cartel's fleet is the Richese Missile Corvette and the Generic Missile Cutter, with an assortment of different missile ordnance. Basic, Flash, Heavy, Anti-Fighter, Long-Range, Harm (X), Chaff, Antimine, Antimissile, and Jammer are all commonly used. House Ordos also commonly utilizes the Generic Assault Cutter for boarding purposes and the Ixian Escort Corvette for interception for the larger ships. Their basic fighter is the Sirat Interceptor.

The true strength of the Ordos fleet however lies in two of

their home built designs. The House Ordos Missile Cruiser is the most dangerous ballistic vessel in the Imperium. And the Ordos Taqwa Missile Fighter is an efficient weapons platform capable of delivering a consistent deluge of missiles.

### *House Ordos Taqwa Missile Fighter*

A light fighter that functions as an efficient missile platform, the Taqwa Missile Fighter is named after the ordeal of a divine trial by fire. The Taqwa is not as capable as the Shirkhan assault fighter, and carries a more traditional Ultralight Vulcan Railgun than a Medium Lasgun. Yet the Missile fighter can carry 6 missiles, and Ordos is known to outfit these ships with advanced missiles such as Fighter Long Range, Fighter Heavy, and Fighter Drop-out versions.

### *House Ordos Missile Cruiser*

The ultimate prestige ship in the Imperium, the Ordos Missile Cruiser carries 8 type-L and type-R missile racks, backed up by two special weapon systems. First and foremost is their Sensor Mine system, which adds tracking ability to their ballistic homing capabilities. Allowing them to paint the field with more intensive EW signatures, it helps the cartel tilt the playing field in their favor utilizing their most preferred advantage of all – wealth.

Their second new plaything is the devious Deviator missiles, a combination of chemical and psychological weapon that can indispose and even compromise the loyalty of enemy crews. A psychotropic stimulant, the Deviator can cause radical psychosis in those who are exposed to it.

The only real disadvantage of the Ordos Missile Cruiser is its

expensive cost and its relatively poor maneuvering capability. However the Missile Cruiser has excellent weapon arcs and has excellent stand off range. Note see Sensor Mines and Deviator Missiles under New Weapon Systems for extensive rules.

## Leadership

House Ordos is not known for the quality of its leadership, instead investing extensively into its upgraded weapons systems. Many of the House's leaders are mercenaries, and their dedication to their duty often shows it. In addition, their last Master Mentat was executed for graft, and Mentats are out of favor with the Cartel at the moment. The leadership House Ordos brings to battle can be exploited.

A House Ordos Fleet may purchase the following expert characters at normal cost:

Expert Scanner  
Expert Missleer  
Expert Pilot  
Expert Ballistics Officer (S7, P10)  
Expert Quartermaster (L2, P48, 10% cost for House Ordos)

## Spice Smugglers

**Allies:** None

**Enemies:** None

## Spice Smuggler Troops

The Spice Smugglers themselves are dangerous scoundrels who play for keeps on Arrakis. While not particularly disciplined, the Spice Smugglers are unrepentant criminals and make up with enthusiasm what they lack in



order. Consider them normal troops in all respects, with a cost of 10 points per unit.

## Spice Smuggler Fleets

It is rare when a smuggler fleet becomes a real danger in an area, though it has happened. It is more common when Spice Smuggler fleets are hired as extra muscle by those who aren't too worried about the letter of the law. The Spice Smuggler Lighter is a common ship to be found for mercenary work, and the Smugglers often use the generic Assault Lighters and corvettes and Sirat Light Fighters. An occasional Ordos Taqwa Missile fighter has been known to make it in their rosters.

### *Spice Smuggler Lighter*

The ship of choice of the Desert Spice Smugglers, the Lighter is similar in appearance to one of the most ubiquitous ships in Imperial

space, the Cargo lighter. However, the break-away casings in front of the primary weapons turrets can reveal the ship for what it is, an agile and dangerous light combat vessel intended to either outfight or outrun any systems defense ships a local minor house or trading coalition might employ. The spice smuggler lighter is particularly dangerous because of the wealth and power the smugglers enjoy as the only illicit source of spice in the Imperium. Instead of the normal missile or matter weapon suite, they can afford the Medium Lasgun, a particularly vicious weapon far above what is normally available in civilian circles. Ships without shields are threatened by its power and the fact as a laser weapon it can't be intercepted. Ships with shields have to determine if the potential Holtzman reaction is worth the cost of closing on the smuggler.

While smuggler ships are just as reliant on Guild Transportation as any other faction,

the fact that they can afford to bribe guildsmen with the Spice Melange allows them free reign over all of the Million worlds.

## Leadership

Spice Smuggler fleets may contain the following elite characters at normal cost:

Expert Helmsman  
Expert Navigator  
Expert Dogfighter  
Expert Evader  
Expert Coordinator  
Expert Scavenger (S7, p6, 15% of ships base value)  
Expert Analyst (S7, p7, 10% of ships base value)

## New Weapon Systems

While the Guild Peace gives the illusion that arms technology has

been somewhat depleted in the Million Worlds, even their power and those of the Lion throne are unable to completely mitigate the march of time.

## Explosive Rounds

While for most missions the penetrating power of the tungsten-cadmium rod is preferred within the Imperium, there are some occasions where damage potential is a better option than armor penetration. Explosive rounds can be purchased for any Matter weapon. A weapon firing explosive ordnance does +2 points of damage per die and changes the damage type to Flash. There is no change to weapons cost with this ammunition exchange.

## Sensor Mines

One of the more innovative ways of getting around the difficulty of processing information from the non-computerized sensor arrays of the warships of the Imperium, sensor mines provide detailed ranging and triangulation on enemy units within 5 hexes of the Mines location. The probes tread the line on what the Proscriptures allow, and are incredibly expensive to purchase from Ix. The great wealth of the Ordos Cartels has so far ensured their near monopolization of these units.

A sensor mine is fired in the ballistic weapons phase at a specific hex location. This is resolved similar to a Narn E-Mine firing in the rules, including making the targeting roll with a die result of 16-20 indicating a misfire. The mine then may target any 1 ship within a 12 hex range of the mine's location and 30 hexes of the original launching ship. As long as the mine exists and the target is within that range the targeting data it reads back to the firing ship adds

+3 to hit on any ballistics, and keeps a lock on for that ship even if the ship would normally lose lock on due to terrain. Note that the sensor mine itself may be blocked if it loses its own line of sight to the targeted unit, such as by an enormous unit like a Guild Heighliner.

Sensor mines have a detection rating of 3, but that is reduced to 1 for the target it is currently tracking. They have 9 structure points, but lose a +1 tracking bonus for every 3 points of damage they take. A sensor mine may change targets every turn.

Multiple sensor mines may track a single target, however for each additional mine the bonus is reduced by 1. So the maximum bonus from the mines is +6 for three mines.

## Deviator Missiles

House Ordos' signature weapon, the Deviator Missile causes confusion and chaos in its wake. A powerful psychotropic weapon, exposure to Deviator gas can cause outbreaks of rage, aggression and paranoia. Originally relatively ineffective in space combat as the ability to seal systems and wear pressure suits made targets largely immune, it wasn't until the Deviator gas was be wed with an acidic base that could eat through acrylic, polymers and sealants that it's true potential was found.

Class: D  
Cost: 8 combat points  
Warhead: 12  
Range: 20 hexes  
Available: 10057  
*Special: Gas*

A Deviator Missile functions as a normal missile in all ways. The warhead on it is reduced however,

doing only 12 points of damage. This is because a portion of the warhead has been removed in order to inject the Deviator gas into the missile. Upon striking the ship the mixture was injected into the fuselage. When this happens, roll 1d4+1. This is the number of pockets of gas that are released.

Track each pocket of gas as a separate critical roll. Each turn determine hit location on the charts as normal with the following exception. The Deviator gas can last on board for multiple turns, and its effects become worse as they linger in the same areas. Keep track of all locations hit, and on the next turn if a roll yields the same location, the player cannot assign it to a different system of that type; instead the gas must hit the same system as was previously hit. Criticals are rolled for each gas pocket at the end of the turn at +4, but they add an additional +4 if they had hit the same target the previous turn! This is cumulative. If a structure roll is hit, subtract 1 power from the ship for the next three turns. At the end of every turn, remove 1 pocket of gas from LCV/MCV/HCV, 2 from a Capital ship, and 4 from an Enormous vessel. This is the base purification ability for most ships, it may be altered in a scenario specific context or as a campaign specific technology goal for an opponent.

If an elite character is in a location when it is struck by a critical they too are risk. The die roll is increased by 1 each turn after the first they face the marauding Ordos gas. Roll a d20 for a critical check, consulting the following chart:

12 or less: No effect.  
13-15: Momentary confusion. They are stunned and cannot act the next turn.  
16-18: Intense psychotic episode.



# Grey 17 is Missing

Character is stunned 1d3+1 turns. 19 plus: Psychotic break. Character is out for remainder of scenario (and may have psychological issues in a campaign). If there are any elite characters in the same location as this character, there is a 50% chance they are killed.

Marine Contingents may also suffer from Deviator gas in a section they are stationed in. If enemy forces are on the section that has been struck, it is necessary to track the effects of the gas pockets during battle. Each pocket may effect a marine contingent, roll on the following chart:

4 or less: The Marine's environment gear holds, no effect  
5-6: Slight contamination, unit is at -1 on all of its rolls this turn.  
7-9: Definite contamination. The unit is immobilized and combat ineffective this turn. Next turn add +1 to their die roll.  
10 or more: Contingent Influenced. It will fight for House Ordos for the remainder of the battle, but at -1 on all die rolls.

## Purification Suits

The penultimate in leading defense technology, Purification Suits are a wise investment for those who think they may be facing House Ordos and its Deviator technology. The suits cost 5% of the cost of the ship they are on, and come free for any elite characters that may be aboard. Once protected, elite characters and marine contingents become immune to deviator gas, and the normal critical locations only gain a +1 critical bonus per turn per hit, not the usual +4.

However, the suits do have their drawbacks. Response time in

general is down on a ship that is fully protected by its Purification Suit, so a vessel using them has a -3 initiative in combat. Also, they are somewhat difficult to put on and fully seal, so a ship that is caught at anything other than battle stations isn't considered to be protected until three full turns after the ship achieves battle stations. Finally, the suits can be considered very tiresome to wear, so in a battle that goes beyond 12 turns of wearing a Purification Suit, every additional turn decreases the ships initiative by an additional -1.

## The Kwizatz Haderach

The shortening of the way, the dream of the creation of a new life that takes a step forward and beyond our own human limitations. Paul Atreides, the Maud'dib was the culmination of a breeding project of legendary focus. The future knowledge of the Kwizatz Haderach often makes combat against their forces an exercise in futility. The concept of True Prescience can be incorporated in a campaign or scenario using the following rules:

1. A True Prescient has all the abilities of a Limited Prescient. They cannot be surprised unless the source of that surprise emerges from a non-tangential realm. Only deeper levels of subspace or non-euclidean dimensions apply. They also may always request to see any SCS in the game, and have knowledge of all locations of characters on ships or planets.

2. The True Prescient may roll initiative in the same manner as



the Limited Prescient. However, instead of only choosing 1 ship or flight to roll initiative for, the True Prescient may choose 6 vessels. Needless to say this will require many more dice. It may be better to simply have the Kwizatz Haderach record the initiatives the turn before. This is best if a judge is available to ensure veracity.

3. The player with the True Prescient may hear where all EW is going to be decided before deciding upon assigning his own fleets EW.

4. The True Prescient may assign intercept against attacks after the die roll is known. He knows exactly how much must be used in each instance.

5. All initiative ties go to the player with the Kwizatz Haderach. His vessel itself has a +10 initiative.

Location: C&C

Cost: N/A (Campaign/Scenario Only)

Note also that these reflect a Kwizatz Haderach's Prescience abilities only. Paul Atreides was a trained Mentat, Ginaz Swordmaster, and Naib as well.

## Endings

*“There is in all things a pattern that is part of our universe. It has symmetry, elegance, and grace - these qualities you find always in that the true artist captures. You can find it in the turning of the seasons, the way sand trails along a ridge, in the branch clusters of the creosote bush of the pattern of its leaves. We try to copy these patterns in our lives and in our society, seeking the rhythms, the dances, the forms that comfort. Yet, it is possible to see peril in the finding of ultimate perfection. It is clear that the ultimate pattern contains its own fixity. In such perfection, all things move towards death.”*

**Leto Atreides**

Thus we finish our tour of the universe of Frank Herbert's Dune. I hope you will enjoy the ships and characters of Dune in your own gaming in the future, and perhaps one day we will return for more information of the land of spice, intrigue and conspiracy to find new battles among the sand. Long live the Fighters!

\* \* \*



Having failed to complete the Destroids for the better part of a month, I decided to feature the last of them in this month's Great Machine. Such an article will ensure that I finish them, as I have little choice. Expect to see the website updated with these new units, and some others that have still yet to see the light of day.

### MAC II Monster

Heavily armoured and equipped with powerful cannons and anti-ship missiles, the Monster forms the core of any destroid defensive formation. The SDF-1 carried only a couple of these massive robots, which proved their worth time and time again. Despite their long-ranged prowess, they are quite vulnerable in close combat as they lack the agility of other mecha.

### Defender

The Defender is the primary anti-fighter Destroid in use by the RDF. Equipped with a quad of either long-ranged autocannons or lasers, the Defender's range and accuracy is unparalleled by any other Destroid weapon. At short ranges it is more vulnerable, being both slow and lightly armoured to the rear.

### Phalanx

The Phalanx is the space-borne counterpart to the Defender, though both were utilised by the SDF-1 during its many battles. Rather than using direct-fire armaments, the Phalanx is equipped solely with powerful and accurate missiles. Large missile drums allow the Phalanx to be engaged for a sustained period of time as ammunition is plentiful. It is however totally hopeless in any close-quarters situation.

### Masamune

Apart from the Mac II, the Masamune is the rarest of the RDF Destroids. Developed in tandem with the Tomahawk as a lighter, more agile Destroid the Masamune saw only limited success. Equipped with a battery of missiles and a GU-11 Gunpod, the Masamune was designed to be a quick-response destroid. In practice however, the RDF preferred the Valkyrie for the task while at the same time, as a destroid the Masamune was lightly armed compared to one like the Tomahawk..

\* \* \*

# ROBOTTECH

### Robotech Continues: The Invid Invasion

*By Paul Brown*

## The Invid Fleet: One Author's Interpretation

The Invid space fleet was somewhat hard for me to wrestle with. I have seen only a few episodes of the Mospeada series, and apart from the Mollusk which was seen in the last Great Machine, the Invid to my knowledge had little to no naval vessels at all. Even my lone and terribly bad Sentinel's video gave only brief glimpses of an apparently large Invid vessel and once again, wave upon wave of Mollusk transports. While a completely fighter-based fleet may not be entirely a bad idea, I think it would grow old fairly quickly as opponents turned off their anti-ship weapons for not wanting to waste power on an un-armoured and empty carrier.

From what information I have managed to glean, I have come up with a respectable number of ships, some of which are unique to one or the other Invid leaders (the Regent and Regis). The most interesting of these developments is the Invid space hive, which is fairly unique to Babylon 5 Wars in using a new type of weapon system which hopefully may open doors to other conversions. Other ships include

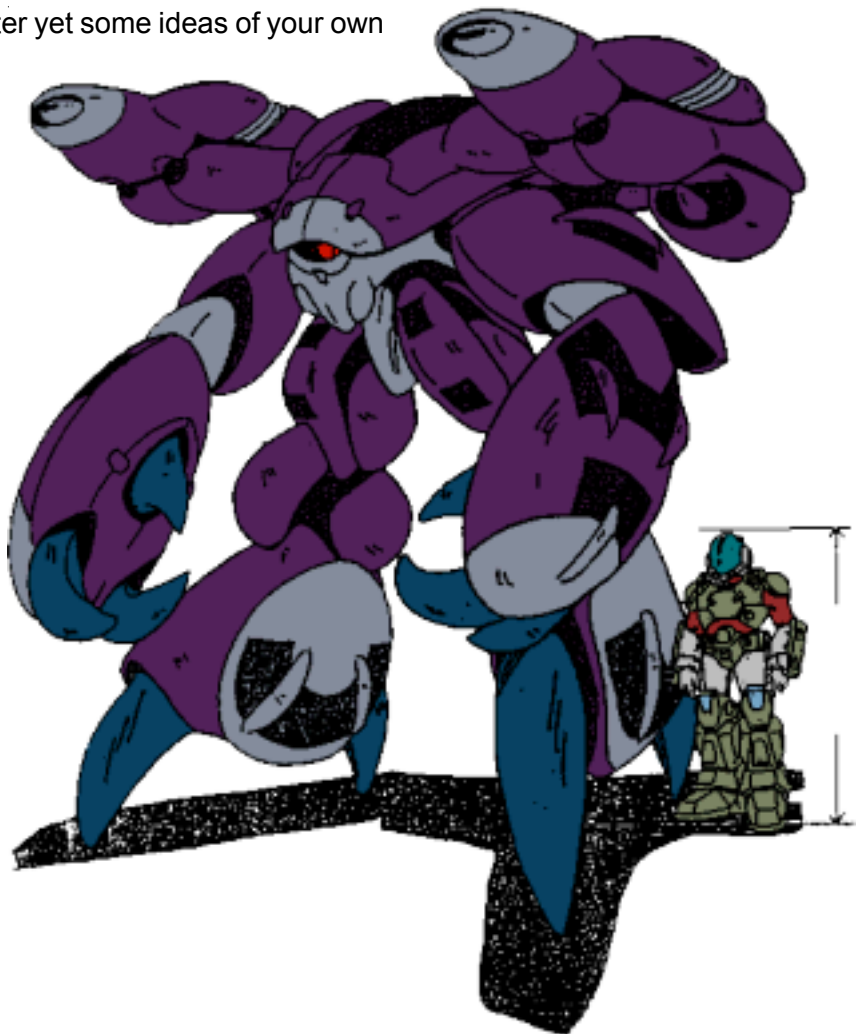
smaller attack vessels, powerful orbital hives and in general a lot of ships that carry a lot of fighter craft. I've also included some rules for the infamous Inorganics of Sentinel's lore. In the end it may be that fighting either as the Regent or Regis will provide two unique and different styles of play.

In any case, I hope you enjoy what I've put together, and hopefully I will receive some feedback, positive or otherwise on the material. Or better yet some ideas of your own

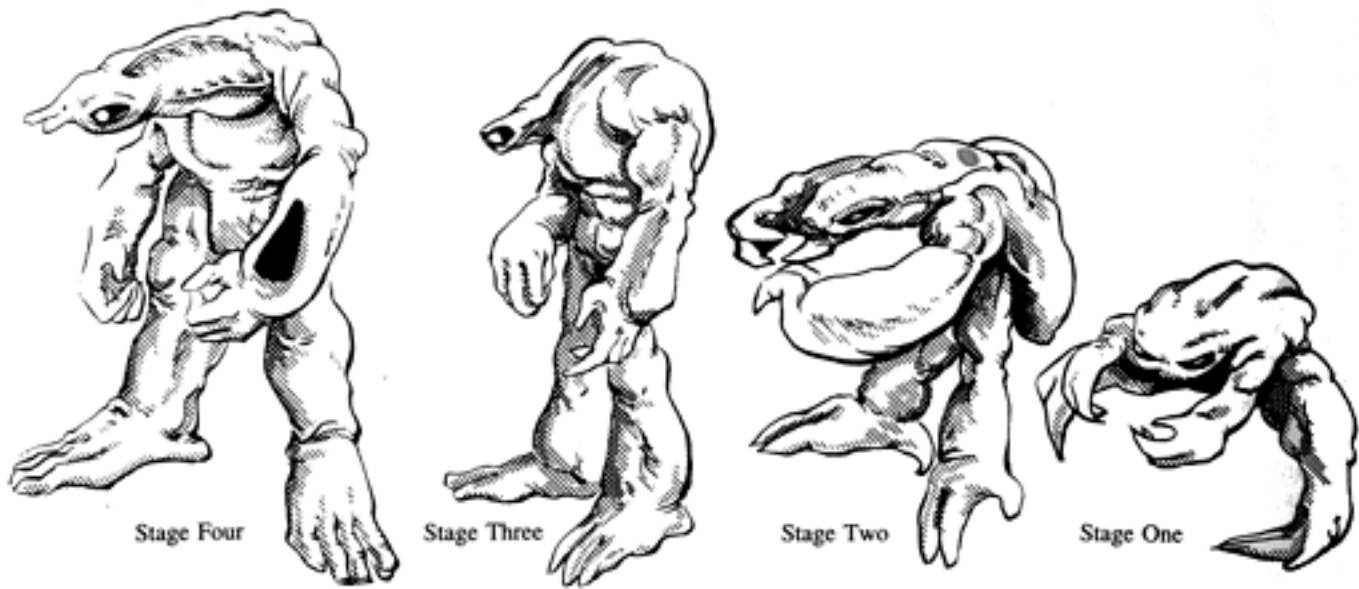
to expand the Invid war machine!

## Invid Physiology

Though the society and the machines of war employed by the Invid suggest an insect-like species, the Invid are in fact humanoid in their most developed form, though still distinctly alien. One may generalise the development of an Invid into four distinct stages:







**Stage 1** Invid are small, slug like in appearance with short arms and legs with under-developed digits. These beings are incapable of independent thought, instead relying on the guidance of Invid queens or other more developed individuals. Aptly labelled as drones, stage one Invid are born into their mecha the ligaa. The stage one Invid is completely reliant upon the mecha for its life functions, were it to leave it would die in a short amount of time.

**Stage 2** Invid are more developed with longer appendages and a more humanoid stature, though with a hunched-over appearance. Greater development allows for increased articulation, this combined with their lack of independent thought has made these Invid into a type of worker/warrior. Like the first stage of development, they are not self-sufficient and must rely on their mecha, in this case the Gurab, to survive.

**Stage 3** Invid possess an even greater degree of development with fully articulate hands and the capability for some independent thought. Though they are still inked to the Invid queens, and follow the

directives of the hive they can assess situations and act accordingly. However the lack of full development still limits the stage three to live within its mecha, the Gamo Pincer, in order to survive.

**Stage 4** Invid represent the species in its fully developed form, with stature and intelligence comparable to a human's. They are able to live and operate apart from any mecha, and think fully for themselves though they still possess unbending loyalty to the hive queens. Typically they operate as internal security in hives in power armour, or act as pilots for Invid craft such as the Mollusk transport.

**Stage 5** Invid are the result of the Regis's "enlightened evolution". Believed to be inspired through her relationship with the Tirolian scientist Zor, her current pattern of thought is that the human-like form is the pinnacle of evolution. Therefore the stage five Invid are identical to humans from an outward appearance. The development has also led to a fully independent mind, apart from the hive mind of the Invid. Meaning that a stage five pilot may not necessarily have the undying allegiance of its hive mind brethren.

Stage five Invid are used to infiltrate human resistance groups, as well as serving for pilots of the formidable Royal Command Battloids.

## Regent and Regis

The Invid species has always been a hive-like race, with societies similar to those of insects found on Earth. A hive would typically have a queen, with a descending order of developed workers within a hierarchy. Earliest records seem to



# Grey 17 is Missing

indicate that prior to the Robotech Master's contact with the Invid, individual hives competed for food and resources. Then at an unknown point in time, the Regent and Regis came to be, and through their ascendance they unified all Invid under one banner.

The Regent and Regis are essentially the King and Queen of the Invid respectively. Still considered a pair, they have long since gone their separate ways taking each a portion of the Invid with them. Though contact between the two is still customary, and at times frequent, each of them has adopted different goals.

The Regent has undertaken a personal quest for power and vengeance upon the Robotech Masters, but in doing so has in many ways emulated his enemy. The first encounter with the Regent by Robotech Forces was during his assault on Tirol, the homeworld of the masters. His fleet and technology is based largely upon what his forces have learned from the Master's own fleet and their clone army, the Zentraedi.

The Regis on the other hand, seeks one thing more than any other, that is a new homeworld for the Invid following the loss of Optera. Her contact with the Tirolian scientist Zor has seemingly prompted an evolutionary change as well as she adopted a humanoid form. Her occupation of Earth, and the subsequent evolutionary experiments which took place there are all in the name of bettering the Invid race. Unlike her husband's war machine, the Regis' fleet is based largely on Invid technology, and consists primarily of mobile hives, or 'hive ships', which she uses to conquer and populate potential homeworlds.



## Regis's Forces

- Hive Ships**
- Space Hive Bases**
- All manned-Invid Mecha**
- Cargo Transports**
- Mollusk Transport**

## Regent's Forces

- Hive Ships (Limited 33%)**
- Trilobite Frigates**
- Sea Devil Gunships**
- Scorpion Troop Carriers**
- Mollusk Transports**
- Clamshell Dropships**
- Igaa and Gurab Mecha**
- Inorganics**

## Giant Crew Capable

While a fully developed Invid has a stature roughly equal to a human's, the Invid Hives tend to have large open spaces to facilitate the movement of mecha or power-armoured sentinels. For gameplay purposes, Invid Hives are subject to all rules for Giant Crew except that the ship does not contain Giant Crew itself. In other words, in Marine combat a Hive could be boarded by mecha or Zentraedi but the Invid crew would be considered to be standard marine contingents.

## Plasmatic Drives

Unlike most space craft, Invid Hives, apart from their inherent mecha compliment, do not mount what most would consider weaponry. But this does not mean that they are entirely without defences. As many unfortunate opponents have found out, the plasma-based drives of the Hives can prove a very effective defence against unwary opponents.

The core of these defences is the Plasma Capacitor. Similar to the Vorlon device, the Capacitor stores Plasma energy provided by the engine. This energy is then directed through the thrusters in various ways to inflict damage upon the enemy. This form of attack is also dependant upon the shielding of the vessel. Similar to how a laser has both an emitter and a focusing lens, the gravitational forces of the shields focus the directed plasma into more coherent attacks.

The Capacitor starts any scenario with a full charge, one point of energy for every box. Each turn, the ship may draw energy from the capacitor and make attacks from one or more thrusters. A thruster may be used for both manoeuvring and attacking on the same turn as permitted by its thrust rating. Both the manoeuvring of the ship, the weapon attacks or both can contribute to over thrusting checks, and both are subject to any critical hits upon the thruster.

The Capacitor is completely reliant upon the engine for its stored plasma. At the start of each turn in the power allocation segment, thrust from the Engine can be moved to the Capacitor. For simplicity's sake, only plasma energy from the Capacitor can be used to attack, and only Engine energy can be used to manoeuvre. Energy cannot be transferred from the Capacitor to the

engine, but power can be used to buy additional thrust to increase the potential gain in the Capacitor's reserves.

Each ship will have weapon data outlying the various attacks possible, and the power necessary to carry them out. Each thruster may perform any number of differing attacks, up to its thrust limit, unless otherwise noted. Some attacks may have additional effects such as velocity or position changes.

Despite its use as a weapon, the thruster remains a thruster in nature and these rules do not entail a second critical roll on the weapon chart. Weapon criticals are never rolled. Instead, because of each attack's dependency upon the shielding for coherency and accuracy, when there is no shielding in the arc being fired through (either because the shield, or the emitters themselves have been destroyed), any attacks are subject to both weapon criticals.

Because of their reliance on the Engine for power, ships without additional weaponry tend to have trouble in prolonged engagements.

*Example: A small Hive Ship moving speed 4 with a Capacitor charge of 10 wants to make an attack through its badly damaged aft section. The aft thruster has taken an efficiency critical, and the aft shields are down. The ship decides to fire a Wide Stream attack with a power requirement of 4. Because of the efficiency critical, the ship will need to direct 8 points of energy through the rating-6 thruster (resulting in an overthrust roll), the Capacitor will have 2 points of energy remaining. Also because the aft shields are down, the weapon is reduced in range to -2 per hex (from -1 per hex), and suffers a -2 penalty to all damage rolls.*

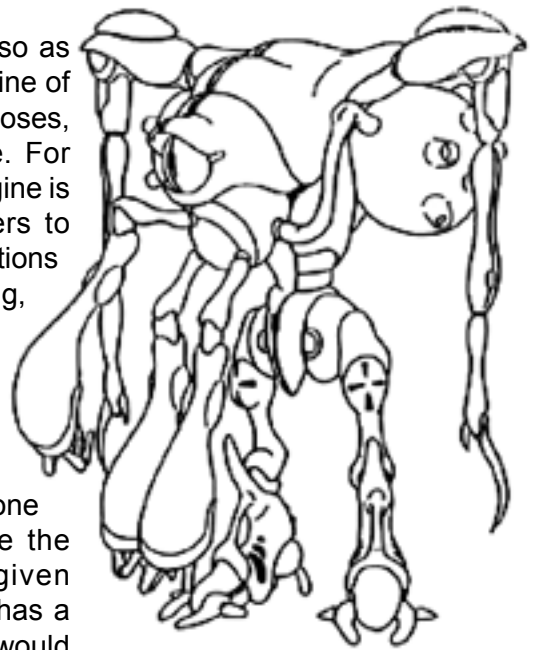
And just to re-iterate, so as there is no confusion, the engine of a plasmatic drive has two purposes, movement and weapons fire. For movement, thrust from the engine is directed towards the thrusters to perform typical movement options such as acceleration and turning, or in other words, there is nothing new here. For weapons fire, thrust from the engine is moved and stored in the plasma capacitor. Thrust from the capacitor is sent to one or more thrusters to provide the 'power' requirement of a given attack. So if a type of attack has a power requirement of six, it would require six points of thrust from the Capacitor and would be 'fired' from the thruster, with all thrust counting towards thrust limits and overthrusting. I hope that's clear.

## Gravitic Deflector Shields

Other than a more specific name as to their nature, the Deflector Shields found on Invid vessels functions exactly to those of Tyrel's Star Trek conversions. Also take special note that fighters *cannot* fly under these shields.

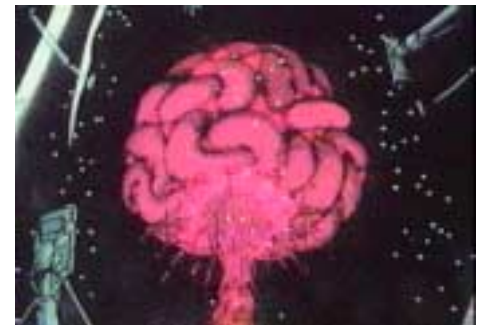
## Inorganics

The label inorganics applies to a range of killing machines in use with the Regent's forces. Rather than mecha piloted by even stage 1 invid, the Inorganics are completely robotic and are controlled by an Invid brain onboard an allied vessel. Typically the Inorganics are used only in ground warfare to exterminate enemy troops and civilians, but they can play a role in space combat as



well, being used to board enemy vessels.

Inorganics are extremely robust and lethal killing machines, equipped with heavily armoured bodies and a variety of weapons. Once they engage the enemy, they are extremely hard to stop. A contingent of Inorganics counts as a normal marine contingent, except that they always get a straight -2 bonus to all combat rolls including the initial boarding and any subsequent missions, this bonus is *not* cumulative with other modifiers (ie, attacker allowed to ram). In addition, if after a roll is made, the result is a "marines killed", the Inorganic contingent is *not* destroyed. Because they are so durable, each contingent has two hitpoints. After the first death result,





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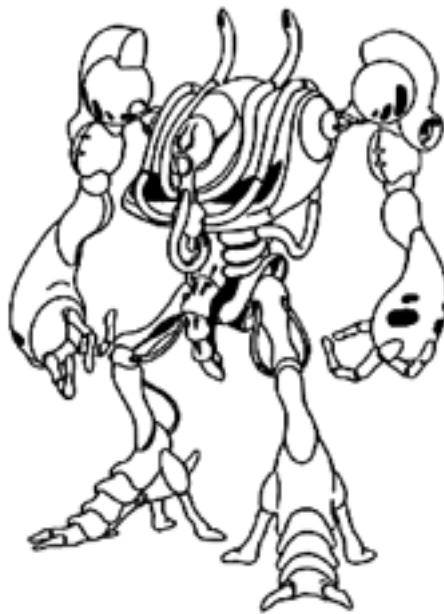
mark one hitpoint as gone. Once they have suffered their first hitpoint, they are less effective and lose the -2 bonus. If at this point in time, the contingent had one or more +1 modifiers accumulated from failed mission results, these modifiers will still apply. Once the contingent suffers its second hitpoint, it is removed from play. Note that it is extremely unlikely to see Inorganics used in a defensive role, defending Invid ships should be left to hive guards. If a ship carrying Inorganics happens to be boarded, the machines will probably be in storage and it is doubtful if the Invid would unleash them on their own ship. Some Inorganics use weapons such like Nerve Gas that would indiscriminately kill Invid as well.

Inorganics are special troops and cost 20 points per contingent.

## Invid Enforcers

Enforcers or Hive Guards act as the internal security forces on Invid ships and landed Invid Hives. They are stage four Invid encased in powered armour and equipped with high-powered energy weapons. In combat, they are treated as normal marine contingents with the bonuses given to Gaim troops.

The number of Hive Guards onboard any one Invid vessel is about one in every three contingents. So if a ship has nine contingents (calculated from ramming factor), three of them will be power armoured Guards. Invid outside of these suits do not warrant any bonuses or penalties. When attaching a breaching Pod or wreaking havoc, randomly determine if the opposing forces met are Hive Guards or normal Invid. When sabotaging a system, any primary system will be guarded by Enforcers while any non-



primary system will not be. Any captives (in a Rescuing a Captive mission) will likewise be guarded by Enforcers. And when capturing a ship, every third contingent will be Enforcers (Invid casualties should be determined randomly).

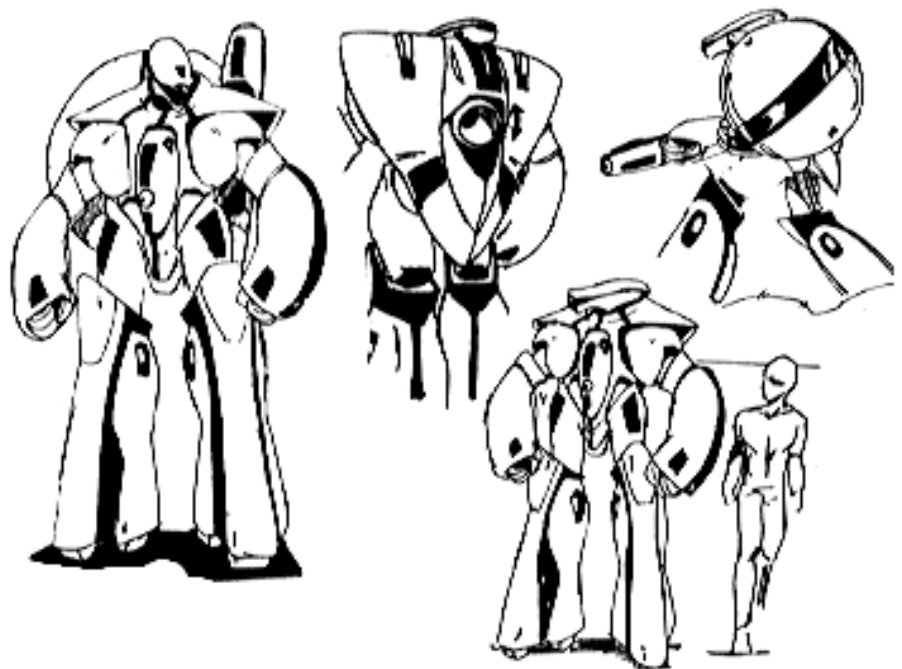
Though Enforcers are treated as Gaim troops, the Invid ships as a whole are not and therefore marine contingents should be calculated at one per 20 ramming factor, not one per 15 as per the Gaim.

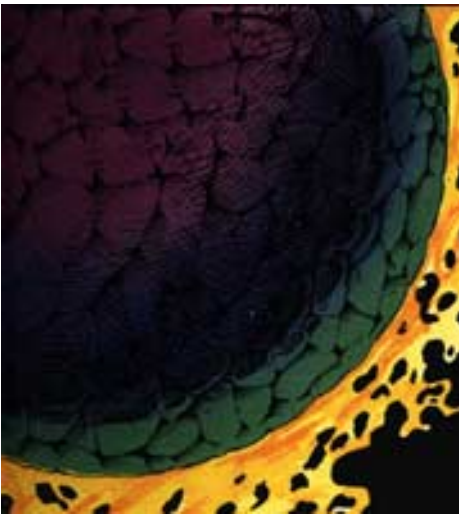
Should a player wish to board an enemy ship with Enforcers, or simply purchase more to defend an important ship, Enforcer contingents cost 15 points each.

## Ships of the Invid Fleet

### Small Mobile Hive

The small mobile Hive is one of the more common vessels in the Invid fleet. The ship boasts strong shielding, and a fair-sized complement of mecha for defence. The plasma reserves are however not very great, combined with an inadequate engine and limited attack options, the ship will not stand up in a prolonged engagement. Beyond these limitations, the thruster system lacks the redundancies found in larger vessels and because of its small size the hive will crumble under enemy fire once its shields are penetrated. In longer battles the hive must rely upon friendly mecha to give it periods of 'rest' in which it can restore its capacitor's energy.





## Communications Hive

These hives are about equivalent in size to the small mobile hives, but have a different role in the Invid network. On a planet, these hives are the centres of data transfer networks and also provide high sophisticated scanning equipment. This sensory equipment requires a fairly extensive amount of space throughout the hive. As a result, the ships carry less mecha and have less extensive defences. The hives themselves are slightly more robust due to a less porous construction.

For offensive capabilities, the communication hive is fairly limited. Stronger engines are intended to propel it away from any potential aggressors. The Plasma Capacitor

has a low storage capacity that can be replenished quickly by the engines, but the offensive capabilities themselves are fairly limited, being either short ranged or defensive in nature. Though a long-ranged attack is possible, the multiple smaller thrusters cannot safely execute the required discharge. In general the hive is best used in a supporting role, and kept well behind the front lines should space combat become a necessity.

## Medium Mobile Hive

The standard sized hive of the Invid, it has nearly double the capabilities of the small hive in all areas. Its greatest assets are the ability to launch large amounts of mecha, along with more redundancy in its thruster array. Increased thrust gives it manoeuvrability almost on par with the smaller hive, and a large Plasma Capacitor enables its to fight in more prolonged engagements.

The Medium hive is the first real threat against a Zentraedi Cruiser in a one on one encounter. Given time for its shields to rotate, it can take a tremendous amount of punishment before receiving any damage to its relatively fragile structure while using its extensive thruster system to full effect in cutting

apart the enemy vessels. The smaller hives by comparison often try simply to buy time to escape.

## Large Mobile Hive

The Large mobile hive is a large construct that dwarfs all but the largest vessels. Despite its size, the hive is relatively fragile due to the very hollow nature of the craft. Like its brethren, it relies on strong gravitic shielding to deflect enemy attacks before they can damage the structure beneath.

With its tremendous amounts of shielding, opponents are well advised to concentrate a maximum amount of firepower into a single facing to overwhelm its shielding. Failing that, a sustained attack from all directions will eventually wear down the vessel. By not allowing the ship to concentrate its shielding to any one facing, one side or the other can eventually break through.

**Note:** Due to space restrictions the SCS for the Large Hive is somewhat cluttered. If in doubt as to where a shield or hangar belongs, the launch vector or icon number should be a good indicator.



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## Space Hive

The Space Hive came into being during the second occupation of Earth by the Invid forces. After determining that the success of the human resistance was due in part to both attacks and supplies from REF starships, the Invid designed a new type of mobile space hive to orbit the Earth. The new hives would serve as a strong defensive network against enemy fleets, providing both swarms of Invid mecha and deadly anti-ship firepower. The hive is only capable of limited, strategic movement and as such its weaponry does not reside in the power of its engine. Rather using technology similar to that employed by the Regent's forces, the hives are equipped with six large spikes protruding from main sphere upon each of which is a strong anti-ship laser cannon.

The hive has above average armour and shielding because of its immobility. Smaller hangers dot the outer hull, each capable of launching a number of mecha. The primary

hangar has additional facilities for mecha, shuttles, and can even berth the smaller Invid vessels. The hive's greatest weakness is its immobility and subsequent vulnerability to stand-off weapons such as the Reflex Cannon.

## Trilobite Command Frigate

This vessel forms the core of the Regent's forces by providing transport and command for the Invid war machine. The sole armament of the ship is a pair of reverse-engineered Zentraedi weapons protruding from the fore of the vessel. A respectable shield barrier covers the ship, which is armoured far above most Invid ships of its size.

Its main strength however lies in its ability to transport and deploy Invid troops, most notably the Clamshell dropships and supporting mecha to enemy worlds, where its inherent bio-engineered serves as the overall commander for the robotic Inorganic forces. The anti-ship cannons act mainly as supplementary firepower to support Hive Ships or Invid Mecha.

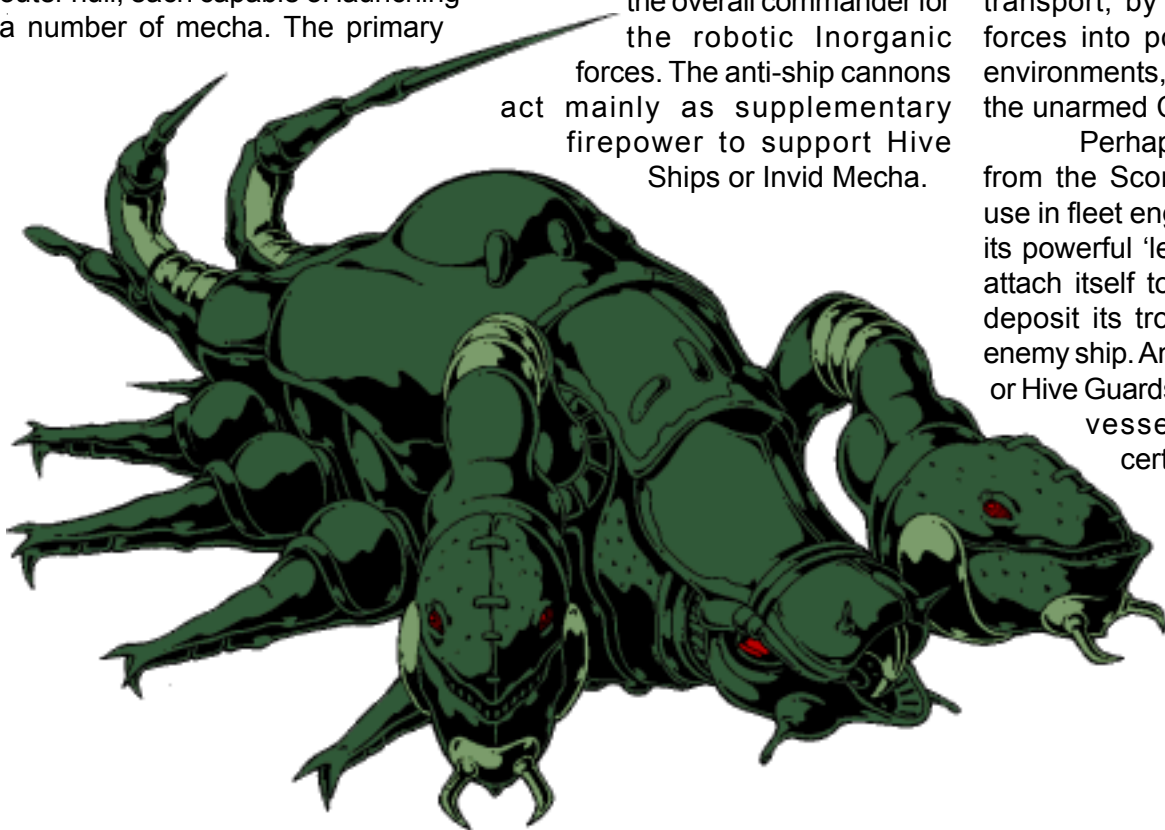
## Sea Devil Gunship

A seldom seen Invid design, the Sea Devil is a smaller vessel used to supplement the Regent's mecha swarms in battle. Comparable to the Quilrella Tzur Gunship in use by the Zentraedi, the gunship incorporates reverse-engineered Zentraedi weapon turrets and a pair of laser cannons into a relatively small frame. Combined with its small profile and excellent manoeuvring, the ship is a force to contend with. Like the Clamshell and the Mollusk, the Sea Devil is commanded by a relatively small number of Stage Four Invid in Malar Hive Guard armour.

## Scorpion Troop Carrier

This odd design is used solely in the Regent's forces. Shaped similar to a three headed insect, the Scorpion mounts a variety of light anti-ship and anti-fighter weaponry. Its true purpose is as a troop transport, by depositing the Invid forces into potentially dangerous environments, a role it shares with the unarmed Clamshell.

Perhaps the greatest threat from the Scorpion comes from its use in fleet engagements. By use of its powerful 'legs' the Scorpion can attach itself to enemy vessels and deposit its troops directly onto an enemy ship. An assault by Inorganics or Hive Guards on any modest-sized vessel will spell almost certain doom for the ship.





## Clamshell Dropship

To the untrained eye the Clamshell appears nearly identical to the Mollusk Transport, however the Clamshell is optimised with another role in mind. Rather than deploying scout and boosted scout in naval engagements, the Clamshell is used to transport and deliver Invid mecha or Inorganics to a planet's surface. The ship is typically deployed from a Trilobite Command Frigate, and includes additional armour and speed at the loss of a hyper-fold drive. Each dropship can transport up to two wings of Gurab Shock Troopers or two platoons of Inorganics.

Inorganics are the favoured landing force in use by the Regent. They are frequently utilised to soften up ground forces before launching full scale-assaults with manned Invid mecha.

## ligaa Assault Mecha

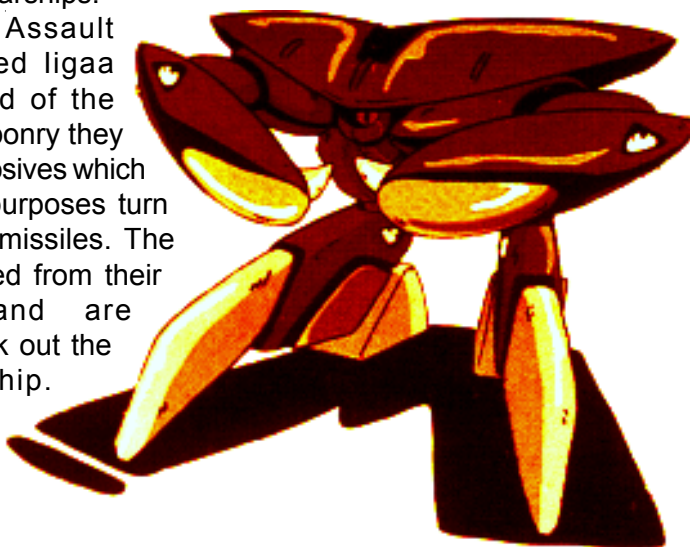
No one in the Robotech Forces realised the true extent of the Invid's selfless devotion to the cause until they encountered this mecha. The first encounter led to the loss of several warships, as a wave of Assault ligaas streaked past the Veritech wings and slammed head-first into the allied warships. At their core the Assault Mecha are boosted ligaa scouts, but instead of the typical plasma weaponry they are loaded with explosives which for all intents and purposes turn them into manned missiles. The fighters are launched from their mother ship, and are commanded to seek out the nearest allied ship. Though many may be shot down by screening fighters, many more often

break through with enough destructive force to down a warship in only a few hits. Though first encountered by humanity in 2031, there are rumours that even the Zentraedi in their prime were surprised by the suicidal tactics of the Invid ships. Though to the Invid rulers, the stage-one controlled mecha are all but expendable.

## Last Remarks

Note that a super-hive worthy of Reflex Point (or what I've heard about it) does not appear in this issue. Invid Central Command Hives would dwarf even the Large Space Hives and would require multi-page SCSes. Expect an SCS for such a ship either in a later Great Machine or simply on the webpage itself: <http://knossos.firenebula.com> (whenever I get around to updating it!)

\* \* \*

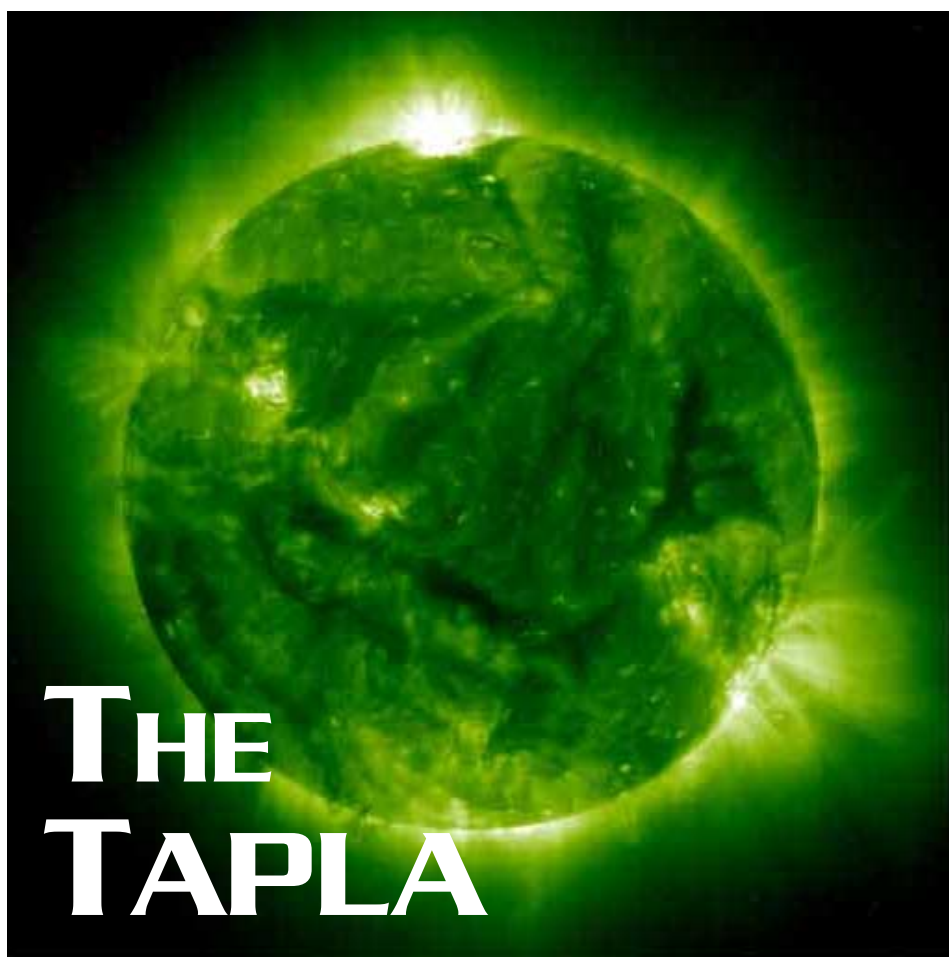


## Who Wants to be an Invid?

The Regis is now accepting volunteers to fill open positions in his grand starfleet. Applicants must be willing to start at the pupal level and allow their career to mature from there.

Successful applicants will find themselves in the fun, fast-paced field of galactic conquest. The Regis' fleet will lay waste to entire worlds while the Regis performs his daily talk show, beamed instantaneously to over one-thousand soon-to-be-conquered planets throughout this area of the galactic rim.

High turnover rate, but high pay. For applications, please visit your nearest Invid recruitment center and tell them you want to be part of the alien invasion force!



## The Living Ships of Thirdspace

By Sean Sturgeon

The following are changes based upon the completion of the Tapla SCS's and comments I have received, including feedback from b5wars.net people. Most like the Tapla, but prefer simplification. These rules supercede those included in Issue 9 of The Great Machine.

## Tapla Telepathy

All Tapla are telepathically linked regardless of distance (unless special scenario-specific rules state otherwise), but their telepathy does not extend beyond the dimension

they currently in. This means no link exists between Tapla in normal space and those in hyperspace or Thirdspace.

## Psi Ratings

All Tapla are telepathic to some degree and are each is assigned a Psi Rating.

The Tapla ships no longer have split Psi Ratings. Instead, the Psi Rating of a Tapla unit is equal to its initial EW Sensor rating or Offensive Bonus. This gives Psi Ratings as follows: Spores are P-4s, Pods P-7s, LCVs P-10s, Starfish P-13s, Jellyships P-15, Vines P-18, Gates P-16.

## Telepathic Attacks

By virtue of their natural telepathy, Tapla units are capable of

performing telepathic attacks against other units in combat.

Psi stun and psi burst attacks occur during the Electronic Warfare & Ballistic Launch Segment of the turn, at the same time that telepathic attacks are made against Shadow units under the normal turn sequence. Psi attacks can be targeted against targets within the forward 180° of any Tapla ship. The one exception to this rule is Tapla bases, which have a 360° arc for purposes of telepathic attacks.

Spores are incapable of performing telepathic attacks. Pods, Sprouts, Starfish can perform psi stuns. Jellyship, Gates and Vines can perform psi bursts.

## Psi Stun

Pods, Sprouts and Starfish are able to utilize this attack which acts according to the "Telepaths vs. Shadows" rules, except that a successful "lock-on" roll vs. a flight of fighters results in the immediate dropout of one fighter in the flight. One additional fighter will be forced to dropout of the flight for every full three points the Tapla unit beats the needed "lock-on" roll.

*Example: A Starfish (P-12) needing a 12 to-hit against a fighter flight. The Starfish rolls a "5", causing 3 fighters to dropout of the flight.*

## Psi Burst

A more powerful form of psi stun, the psi burst is used by more evolved Tapla craft, including the Jellyship. The psi burst is treated as a psi stun, except that an additional fighter will be forced to dropout for every two points below the needed to-hit, an improvement over the psi stun. Additionally, a psi burst can be used to attack enemy light combat vessels. A successful psi burst attack on a LCV will reduce the target's

initiative by 3 for the next two turns (non-cumulative).

## Defending Against Telepathic Attacks

Telepaths can help defend against Tapla psi attacks, lessening their effect. If a telepath's unit is attacked by a psi stun or psi burst, subtract one-third the telepath's P-rating from the Tapla's psi attack to-hit roll. If the telepath is onboard a LCV, subtract their full P-rating from the Tapla's psi attack to-hit roll.

## Tapla Technologies

### Bio-Thrusters

All Tapla ships utilize bio-thrusters like those found on Shadow vessels. However, Tapla bio-thrusters also function like gravitic drives.

### Energy Shielding

All Tapla units have between two to four points of energy shielding which reduces the unit's defense profiles by the amount given in the energy shield unit. Matter and Gravitic class weapons *ignore* the effects of Tapla energy shielding, rolling to-hit against the unit's normal, unmodified defense ratings.

Tapla shields are "hull-tight" and cannot be flown under by fighter units.

### Semi-Advanced Sensors

The Tapla have slightly better sensors than the norm, but are still not on par with those utilized by the Ancients. The Tapla are immune to the effects of younger race masking technology, including Minbari jammers, stealth technology, and cloaking devices. Ancient stealth technologies, such as the

Torvalus shading field, affect the Tapla as normal.

Beyond what has been stated above, Semi-Advanced Sensors gain none of the other benefits associated with Advanced Sensors.

### Sensors in Hyperspace and Thirdspace

Tapla ships no longer receive a bonus to their Sensor rating while in either hyperspace or Thirdspace.

### EM Effects

The Tapla are highly resistant to the effects of hard radiation and electromagnetic effects. Tapla flight units are immune to the auto-dropout effects of EM weaponry. Additional effects from EM weapons such as modifiers to critical rolls are also ignored.

#### Non-Atmospheric Units

All Tapla units are non-atmospheric. A Tapla will die if exposed to virtually any type of atmosphere.

### Self Repair

The Tapla utilize self-repair units like those operated by the Ancients, though in a more limited fashion. The Tapla self-repair unit uses stored energy to perform repairs on either structure or individual systems. However a Tapla unit **MUST** take damage during a turn in order for it to use its self-repair unit. Otherwise it cannot be used to repair damage.

Tapla can repair themselves between scenarios by getting into proximity with an energy source, but this is beyond the scope of the B5W game system.

## Superior Maneuverability

The Tapla have exceptional maneuvering capabilities, as they are fully sentient "ships". In terms of acrobatic antics and general temperament, the Tapla's closest Terran analog would be dolphins. Whereas the Ancients use only semi-aware organic ships or fancy machines while the Tapla *are* their "ships", and this is a main reason for their superior maneuvering stats.

## Power Drain

Tapla may perform a power drain attack once per turn against any unit in their ending hex (but not any hexes in between). The power drain attack is rolled like a normal weapon hit during the Movement-Based Weapon Segment of the turn sequence with a fire control rating of +3/+2/+1. Neither OEW nor DEW has any effect on the to-hit roll.

If the weapon hits its target, the target will immediately suffer a power shortage of 1d6, which will persist until the end of the next turn. The targeted vessel will have to shutdown enough power using systems to cover this power shortage immediately after being affected by the power drain. Fighters and shuttles affected by a power drain must check for dropouts with a +2 penalty. A unit can only be affected by a single power drain attack in a any one turn.

Power drains may only be attempted once per three turns.

## Boarding Operations

Like Ancient craft, the Tapla cannot be boarded.

## Terrain Effects

Tapla are considered Ancients for purposes of terrain effects (RC p.232).



# Grey 17 is Missing

## Killing the Tapla

A Tapla is killed if they lose all of their primary structure, or if their heart (reactor) or brain (C&C) are destroyed.

## New or Modified Tapla Units

### Spores

Tapla Spores are now considered to be a special type of captor mine. Spores score Damage 12 (matter) and have a Range of 12. The Spores will attack any non-civilian unit that moves within this range. Civilian ships will not be targeted. The Spores are destroyed after a successful attack. If the Spore attack fails, the Spore "mine" is moved into the target's hex where they will be able to make another attempt on the following turn.

Once active, Spores provide Guardian Array interception for all friendly Tapla units against ballistic weapons ONLY. In this capacity, the Spores are considered to have always moved into the hex ahead of any other Tapla units. In other words, they can always intercept ballistic fire that passes through their hex!

Finally, Spores are considered telepathic, with a rating of 4. They can perform psi stuns, but not psi bursts. In reality, only some of the Spores in a cluster are telepathic but, as each Spore "mine" is really a cluster of nearly 120 individual Spores, this mechanic adequately simulates their telepathic abilities.

Being captor mines, Spores *do not* have energy shields.

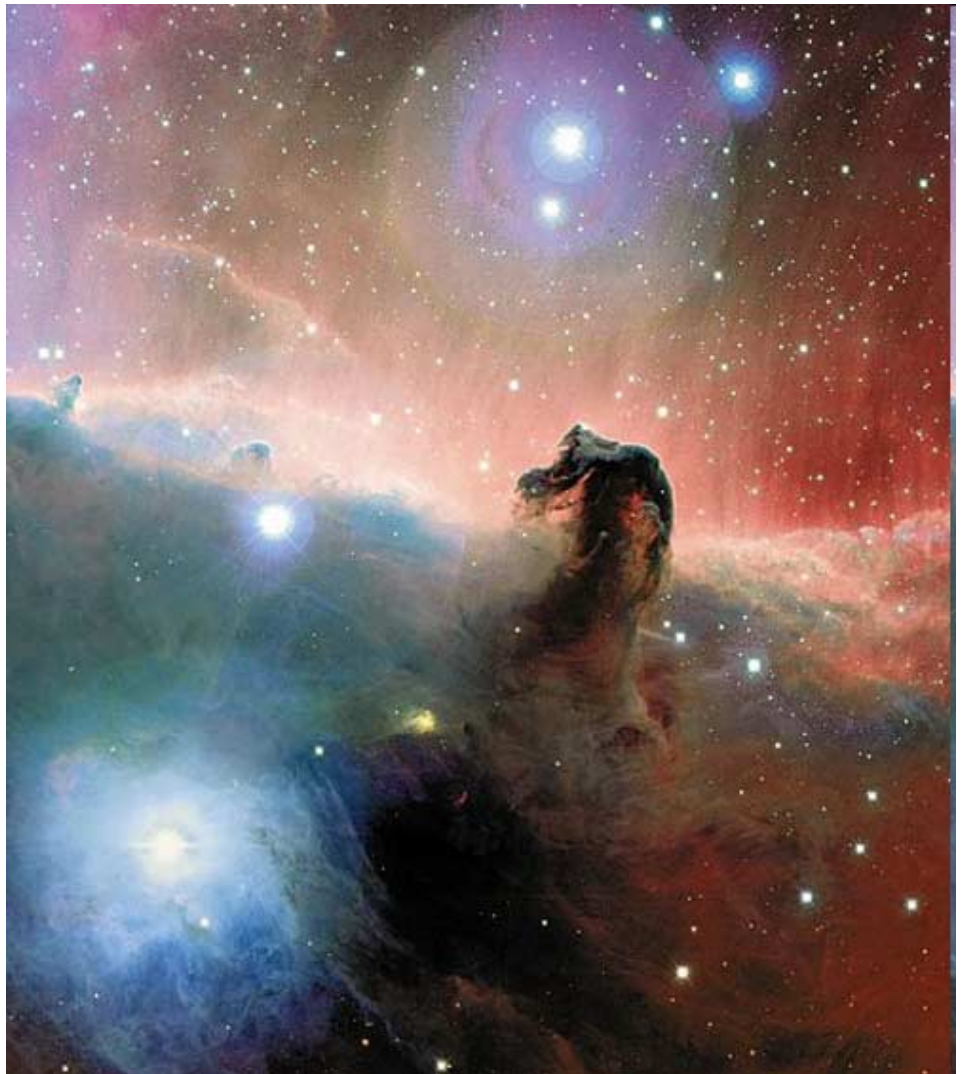
Cost: X, Range 12, Accuracy: +4, Damage 12 (Matter), Signature 2.

### SunVine

In appearance, the SunVine is a ball-like core with seven, 10 km-long tendrils. Only three SunVines are known to exist. Each has dedicated Starfish and Jellyships that the Vine controls. Vine "Alpha" is dedicated to "Continuance" (teeps translate this only partially to something like reproduction combined with eugenics and *bon mot*). Vine "Beta" is dedicated to "Resplendence" (violence and art). Vine "Omega" is dedicated to an unknown quality as all telepathic attempts (two to date) at communication have resulted in the

telepath who made the attempt becoming incurably insane with symptoms of the individual entering a euphoric state wherein they are beyond response to any communication/stimuli.

Vines are able to "enrich" Q-40 into EQ-40 – requiring an additional 20% processing time. EQ-40 Ships gain the following enhancements: Jump Accelerator (however, NOT fragile) as well jump engines able to be built one-third "smaller" (round down) and still get the same performance which will make a bit of extra room available for other things on future ships built to use EQ-40 exclusively. Ships



utilizing EQ-40 suffer reduced penalties (one-third those listed, round down) in nebulae, vs Hyperspace Waveforms/Whirlpools/Rapids and vs negative effects of EM Storms. EQ-40 is thus far incompatible with gravitic drives and cannot be used on such ships. EQ-40 using ships add 20% to the base cost of a ship.

## System Reef

A “coral reef” the size of a star system with “cavities” the diameter of of Saturn’s rings. A couple of different “types” (nebulae, dust, asteroid fields) of space exists along certain tunnels within the reef. All of which surrounds an even more mysterious “core” that is believed to be crystalline-plant-intelligence with the volume of approximately ten stars. Since there is only one Reef and it is “far, far away” in TS it is not something that will ever be encountered – in its “mature” form. The Tapla know that they cannot withstand the TSA.

Once they have successfully migrated all three Vines they will follow the final instructions of the Reef, “immediately upon our destruction by the memory devourers a piece of our core that still shines must be gated to a newfound home near blue heat”. Or put another way, in a death-defying scenario transfer a bit of our soul to a system in the B5verse which has a blue or blue-white star. If this is successful then the Tapla will have successfully migrated. If not then it is only a matter of time, albeit perhaps a long time, before those which migrated die out.

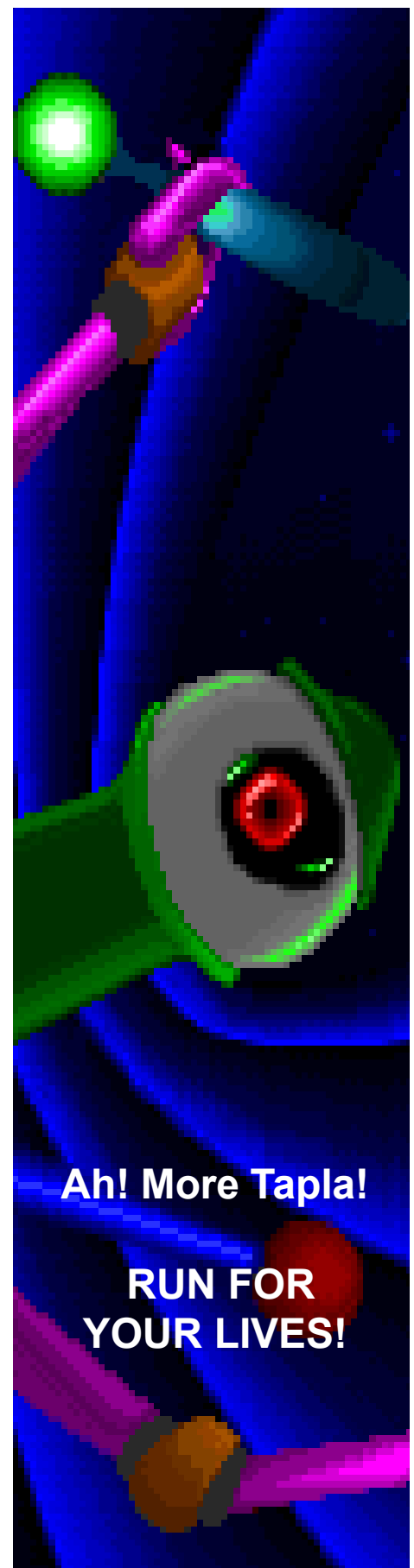
Tapla seek two “nutrients”, energy-heat and “attunement” to the emotional strength tied to memories of sentients that are roughly older than a year past. They do not

perceive the actual contents of a being’s memories, but rather “align” their own telepathic awareness to the “field strength” attached to the memory being “attuned” – there is no draining or “feeding” involved. Many who have experienced it report having near-mystical feelings of “renewal” as well as heightened “vigor and drive”.

## Coral Gate

Roughly the size of a standard Jump Gate, but looks like a circular piece of coral. Gates are mobile albeit slow! They are created partly from Tapla corpses that are not either too damaged as well as being dead “too” long. Can combine efforts of two Gates to move up to Enormous-sized Bases from place to place, but this results in each Gate having a 50% chance of dying after the move and successful or not the Gates are inactive for a day after such an attempt. Gates are used to move Tapla via hyperspace as well as between TS and NS. When operating near Vines two or more Gates have been known to move other Tapla into favorable positions, for instance behindan attacking force.

\* \* \*



**Ah! More Tapla!**

**RUN FOR  
YOUR LIVES!**

# SHIPS OF THE PRIMORDIAL SHADOW FLEET: Fighters and Carriers

### A Look at Shadow Ship Development

*By Stephen Radlett*

## OVERVIEW

While creating the Primordial Cruiser series I included a Standard Carrier Variant of the Standard Cruiser in order to balance Primordial and Ancient vessels. It then occurred to me that the Primordial Standard Cruiser was no longer the 'rung below' the Dreadnought. Indeed, there were still the Heavy and Battlecruisers before we reached the pinnacle of Shadow Combat Vessels. Taking this into account I created first a Carrier based on the Heavy Cruiser, but was not satisfied with the result. I then converted a Battlecruiser into a Heavy (or Battle) Carrier and renamed the Standard Carrier a Light Carrier. I felt fairly pleased with the results, but after posting them on B5Wars.Net, I received some feedback saying that people thought there should be a Carrier equivalent to the Dreadnought. I went back and created the penultimate carrier, the Super Carrier. This awesome vessel was created at the same time as I was developing the ATTACK and

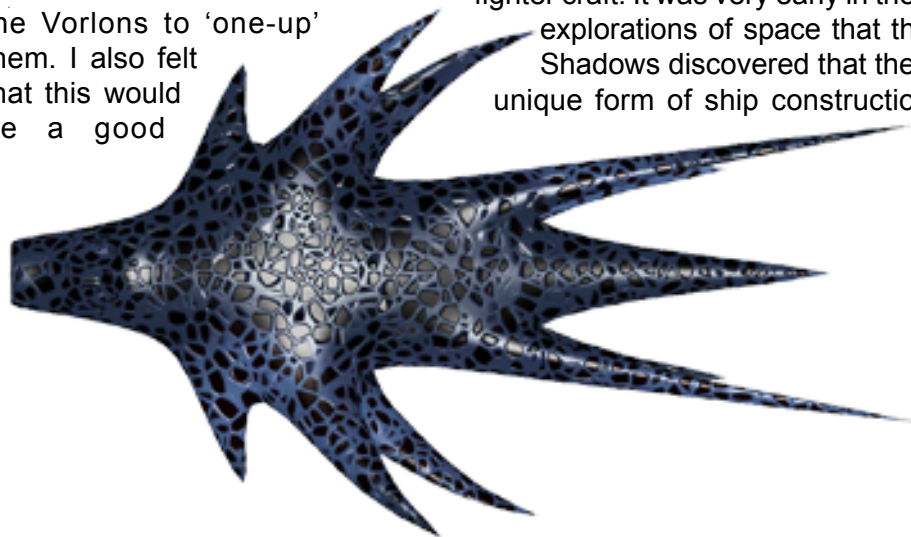
DEFENDER Variant series, and I decided to incorporate some of the features of those vessels. I felt justified in doing so as I doubt that the Shadows would allow such a valuable vessel to be so vulnerable to fighter attack. For this reason, the Super Carrier is also called the ATTACK Carrier.

The Light Fighter came out of a simple thought: "I wonder what a Shadow Fighter with a raking weapon would be like", given that the Torvalus (Masters of Laser weapons) could create an ultra-light variety, why couldn't the Shadows (masters of the Molecular attack) do something similar? The Super Heavy Fighter was created in response to the Vorlon equivalent found in *Wars of the Ancients* as I felt that the Shadows would never allow the Vorlons to 'one-up' them. I also felt that this would be a good

starting point for the Destroyer series seen in the time of the Shadow Wars.

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND – The Development of the Shadow Carriers

Like the vast majority of their brethren (the Vorlons being the notable exception) the Shadows do not require pilots for their fighters, agreeing with the other First Ones, that these small, poorly protected craft pose to great a risk to the pilot. What is interesting to note, is that the Shadows *never* piloted their own fighter craft. It was very early in their explorations of space that the Shadows discovered that their unique form of ship construction







allowed them to separate a small amount of mass and form it into autonomous small craft, still directed by the pilot of the 'mother' ship. These small craft could later be re-absorbed by the carrier, once their mission was completed.

At first, the small fighter craft deployed by the Shadows showed little development, simply employed as scouts or to harass larger craft while the mother ship delivered crippling blows with its powerful molecular weapons. It was not until the Vorlons began to actively oppose the Shadows at almost every turn, did the Lords of Chaos begin to see the need for more powerful fighter craft, and dedicated mother ships to carry them. The Vorlons had been among the first to deploy dedicated fighter carriers, and were quickly able to use their superior fighters in vast numbers to overwhelm the diffuser capacity of large Shadow Cruisers. The Shadows response

was what we now call the 'Spitfire' Medium Fighter. Far more powerful and durable than the earlier Shadow craft, the Spitfire, it was felt, would prove to be an adequate deterrent to the Vorlon fighter groups, however only the largest Shadow Battlecruisers and Dreadnoughts could carry them in sufficient quantities to prove effective.

Masters of genetic manipulation, the Shadows began to modify the genetic structure of as much as one-third of their Light Cruisers. Through a series of gene treatment, the Light Cruisers genetic sequence was sufficiently altered that when the ship transitioned into the stage we call the Standard Cruiser, several differences became apparent. Firstly the self repair system did not develop to the same strength, remaining on par with that of the Light Cruiser. Almost as if to balance this (and to support separating the extra mass to create

fighters) the overall structure of the new ship was heavier than that of the Standard Cruiser. The Vortex Disruptor also failed to appear during the transition. In the place of the Vortex Disruptor and larger Self Repair mechanisms was the ability to launch and maintain up to 24 of the new Spitfire class fighters. The Shadows were well pleased with this new class of ship, dubbing it the Light Carrier, though it carried double the fighter complement of its Vorlon Counterpart, but the Shadows felt that this was necessary as the Vorlons tended to field larger fighters.

Once the Light Carrier had been deployed and proven to be a success, the Shadows decided to pull some of the ships from the field and allowed them to grow and develop as the Cruisers normally would. They then observed what new type of vessel might be made available to their fleets. The result

# Grey 17 is Missing

was a ship on par with the Battlecruiser for size. Again, it lacked the fully developed self-repair systems and one of the Vortex Disruptors failed to develop. Also, the Molecular Slicer failed to grow into the Heavy calibre weapon. Though initially disappointed at the loss of firepower, the Shadows were well pleased when they discovered that this new Heavy Carrier (Sometimes called a Battle Carrier) could launch 48 Spitfires into the battle. This overwhelming fighter superiority served the Shadows well, until the Kirishiac War...

The Kirishiac deployed fighters in vast numbers, each of their Mastership Carriers easily matching the Shadow Heavy Carrier for fighter numbers, and the carrier itself was able to deal and adsorb far more damage. The Shadows again showed their mastery of genetics in developing a response. To ten percent of the Heavy Carriers then in service, further genetic treatments were given, encouraging the living ships to grow and transition into what the Shadows believed would be the ultimate state, on par with their awesome Dreadnoughts...and they were right...

The Shadow Super Carrier, also known as the Attack Carrier was a true terror. Though mounting only a Single Heavy Molecular Slicer, where the Dreadnought carried two, the Carrier also mounted a series of smaller Multiphase Cutters to discourage fighters from attacking it. The truly frightening thing about this ship however, was its ability to deliver up to 72 fighters to the field of battle. This many craft proved to be too much for even a Shadow to control alone. Two pilots were required to control a Super Carrier effectively.

As the Carriers developed, so did the fighters. The first major



fighter development since the Spitfire was the 'Mosquito' Light Fighter. The Shadows had been impressed by the Torvalus Stiletto and could see the value of a raking class weapon on a fighter, particularly when facing the shielded vessels of the Vorlons. The Shadows stalled the development of a multiphase cutter before it had been able to mature into the light variety of the weapon, dubbing it an Ultra Light. This new weapon was mounted in the semi-mature hull of a Spitfire. The result was an incredibly fast and manoeuvrable craft capable of delivering an acceptable raking attack to an enemy capital ship.

The Shadow Assault fighter was created to be the ultimate fighter, designed to match the Super Heavy craft of the Vorlons. A Spitfire was injected with genetic information from a Shadow Mosquito light Fighter and then allowed to develop over a longer period. The result, dubbed the 'Hornet' was perhaps the most powerful fighter ever created. Though slower and less manoeuvrable than the other Shadow fighters, the Hornet could deliver and sustain far more damage mounting multiple weapons and large diffuser tendrils.

## SHADOW "MOSQUITO" LIGHT FIGHTER

This small, highly manoeuvrable fighter is built around the Ultra Light Multiphase Cutter after the Shadows realised how effective Raking weapons could be

when mounted on fighters. Their encounters with the Triad Orders Cherubs and Torvalus Stiletto Drones confirmed this long-held theory. If Torvalus lasers were that effective, how much more deadly would a fighter be if armed with Shadow Molecular weaponry, capable of ignoring armour protection? It was decided to experiment. A Multiphase Cutters growth was halted while still in the early stages of development. The resulting weapon was small enough that two could be mounted on a light fighter hull. The results proved quite effective.

## SHADOW "HORNET" ASSAULT FIGHTER

Built to match the larger fighters being fielded by the Vorlons and later the Kirishiac, the Shadow Assault Fighter proved to be too large to be carried in sufficient numbers in all vessels except for the Battle and Super Carriers. Incredibly powerful and swift for its size, reflecting some of the best engineering the Shadows were capable of, this fighter was retired from service after the first "Shadow War" after proving to be beyond the ability of any younger race pilot to handle.

**HISTORICAL NOTE:** Millennia later, the when the Shadows began preparing for another round in the War Without End it was decided to reactivate these large fighters, and, through a series of genetic treatments, they were further enlarged and enhanced to replace the retired Light and Scout Cruisers, becoming the Shadow DESTROYER Series.

## LIGHT CARRIER

## Unlimited Deployment

A variant of the Primordial Standard Shadow Cruiser designed to carry 24 fighters, sacrificing some self-repair and the Vortex Disruptor. It also mounts a heavier structure. While carriers are generally rare as a rule, these are the most commonly encountered Shadow Carriers and are also referred to as the Standard Carrier.

## BATTLE CARRIER 33% Deployment

The Carrier variant of the Primordial Battlecruiser, it's capable of delivering an incredible 48 fighters onto the battlefield. This enormous fighter payload comes at a price, as the Molecular slicer must be downgraded and one of the Vortex Disruptors removed. Also, self-repair must be reduced. These massive carriers can overwhelm most opponents and are usually accompanied by several Standard or Heavy Cruisers, making them the core of an attack fleet.

## ATTACK CARRIER (SHADOW SUPER CARRIER) RARE SHIP, 10% Deployment

A carrier variant of the Dreadnought and capable of delivering overwhelming numbers of fighters into battle, the Attack Carrier or Super Carrier sacrifices one of the Heavy Molecular Slicers in order to make room for the **72**-ship fighter bay. Also incorporated are 4 Heavy Multiphase Cutters in order to provide close in anti-fighter defence for such a valuable ship. The ship also contains a second CnC called FIGHTER CONTROL to oversee the actions of the massive horde of

fighter craft. The typical fighter deployment for such ships is 12 Assault Fighters, 36 Medium Fighters and 24 Light Fighters, though this can vary. During the height of the Kirishiac War, Super Carriers often carried a full load of Assault Fighters. The overwhelming numbers of fighters this ship can bring to a battle can often turn the tide in favour of the Shadows. Due to the Shadows reluctance to put multiple Shadows at risk in combat situations, these vessels were incredibly rare.

## NEW WEAPONS

### Ultra Light Multiphase Cutter

Usually left to develop into the Light Multiphase Cutter, the Shadows realised how effective Raking weapons could be when mounted on fighters after their encounters with the Triad Orders Cherubs and Torvalus Stiletto Drones. If Torvalus lasers were that effective, how much more deadly

would a fighter be if armed with Shadow Molecular weaponry, capable of ignoring armour protection? It was decided to experiment. A Multiphase Cutters growth was halted while still in the early stages of development. The resulting weapon was small enough that two could be mounted on a light fighter hull. The results proved quite effective.

### Heavy Polarity Cannon

Developed for the new Assault Fighter, these Heavy Cannon proved to be among the most powerful fighter weapons ever developed. Though the Torvalus Ultra Light Laser was capable of more theoretical Damage, the Heavy Polarity Cannon had a much better rate of fire and was capable of ignoring even the heaviest armour completely, making it far more lethal.

**COMING NEXT:** Variants of the Kirishiac War

\* \* \*





## *Scenario:* **RISING SHADOWS**

*By Stephen Radlett*

Having overwhelmed Walker territory (mainly due to the fact that no Walkers were in there territory to defend it!) and beginning to overrun the few orbital defenses that opposed them in Shadow space, the Kirishiac Lords had become overconfident, believing themselves to be the ultimate power in the universe. Unfortunately for them, the Walkers, having (finally) been contacted by the Vorlons were recalling their fleet and preparing to strike back. At the same time, they journeyed to the Shadow Homeworld along with the three Triad Aspects and Lorien in an attempt to rouse the Shadows from their slumber. The Shadows, while fewer in number than the Kirishiac, were just as vicious in combat (if not more so!) and would prove to be valuable allies in showing the Kirishiac their folly. Once awakened and appraised of the situation by the Triad and Walkers the Shadows were enraged that these upstarts, more than 2 billion years their juniors would even think of violating the borders of the Lords of Chaos. They immediately began the long process of awakening their entire race and marshalling their forces. It was decided that what few ships were active at the time would be dispatched to meet the invaders head on and buy the other First Ones some time to finish their preparations.

### **KIRSHIAC FORCES**

2 Lordships  
4 Conquerors  
24 Warrior Projectiles

### **SHADOWS FORCES**

2 Heavy Cruisers  
3 Cruisers  
24 Medium Fighters

### **Victory Conditions**

Destroy the opposition, last one standing wins.

### **Historical Outcome**

This clash represented the first time the Kirishiac encountered in true, organised resistance to their assaults from the other First Ones. Not only did the Shadows oppose the Kirishiac, they defeated them even though they were outnumbered. The Molecular Slicers were unlike any weapon the Kirishiac had faced before, completely ignoring the armour on the Conqueror class vessels. Though eh Lordships heavier, hardened armour has able to provide some protection, it was still minimal when faced with the incredible power of the Heavy Slicers of the Heavy Cruisers. Within minutes the Shadows had turned the odds in their favour, and though the Kirishiac fought hard, the Shadow vessels ability to adsorb and dissipate the destructive energy directed at them proved to be a telling factor.

Following this defeat, the Kirishiac pulled back. Pausing to take stock of the situation and this new development. It appeared that their initial assumption, that the Elder First Ones were hollow, weak and decrepit, requiring only a swift cick to cause them to collapse was not entirely accurate. Clearly the other First Ones would not let the Kirishiac take what was rightfully theirs. The Lords of All began a furious rearming of their ships in an attempt to match their opponents before once more renewing their assault.

\* \* \*



## BATTLEFORCE

### **Battleforce: Scenario: Pirate Island**

*By Chris Nasipak*

*Your scouts have — finally! — located the home base of the pirates that have been harassing this sector of space. It appears to be a small space station in the Denorios system, an otherwise uninhabited region near the sector's border with unexplored space. Your assignment is to board the station, take it as intact as possible, and capture the pirate leadership.*

*The scouts reported sighting several vessels of unknown configuration docked at the station. We assume they are simply more pirate vessels, possibly constructed by our enemies or another star nation, but we cannot be certain. Do not fire on non-hostile ships, and if they truly are a group we have had no contact with, try to open communications with them.*

Battleforce is a competition designed to showcase fleet design and tactical planning by the players. It was originally inspired by a similar competition for the *Star Fleet Battles* game system in their own house journal, *Captain's Log*. It ran for over a dozen issues of the *Babylon 5 Wars* e-zine *BabCom*, and for the first time, we are pleased to bring it to *BabCom*'s successor, *The Great Machine*.

The competition rules are simple and fun. First, an initial mission brief is presented on the forums at <http://www.b5wars.net> along with any particular special rules that will apply. It is common, for example, for Ancients to be excluded from scenarios (their high point values make them impractical to select a fleet from within the limits of most Battleforce missions). Web-published semi-official material such as the Showdowns-6 Web Enhancement, Showdowns-9, -10, and -11, the upcoming Variants-6, Raiders & Privateers 2, and The Great Crusade, are entirely welcome. Similarly, fleets designed using some of the crossover material are also enjoyable. These include the Escalation Wars and Star Trek material found at <http://planetside.firenebula.com> and the Battlestar Galactica fleets from <http://ravensbranch.allen.com/battlespoo.html>.

Players are encouraged to post their fleet selection, along with a description of their tactical plan for the scenario, to the forum thread. Shortly before publication of the next issue of the magazine, the actual scenario will be prepared and formally submitted along with the best of the submitted fleets and their tactical plans.

This month, we have a little pirate-hunting for you. Players were provided the short mission briefing above, along with the usual rules, and the fleet size. 8500 points were allocated, and civilian auxiliaries were permitted for use as troop transports.

### **Scenario: Pirate Island**

Tucked away in a nice little corner of an out-of-the-way solar system on the borders of a powerful empire, a little group of Raiders have made their home. It's a nice place. But it's about to get shot to pieces. Because the cops have found them.

### **Setup**

Place two standard mapboards so that the 01xx row of Map A continues on the 01xx row of Map B. Each player should randomly scatter fifteen asteroid markers around the board, making sure to leave a clear area at least six hexes across around the center (B-2101). A fixed jump gate exists but is not close enough to be on the map.

### **Attacker Forces:**

- Select 8500 points of units as per the Battleforce design rules.
- Deploy within eight hexes of A-0101. Initial speed is 6, any heading.

### **Defending Forces:**

- One Centauri *Marcanos* civilian starbase in B-2101.
- Two Dilgar *Orgolest* pulsar platforms in A-2128 and B-2403
- Two Llort *Graemlar* OSATs in B-1704 and A-1927

# Grey 17 is Missing

- 24 *Delta-V* fighters, in the *Marcanos'* hangar bays
- One Raider *Barque*, two *Sloops*, anywhere within seven hexes of B-2101, any heading, speed 0. Six *Double-V* fighters in the *Barque's* hangar
- One *Wolf Raider*, one *Xebec*, two standard civilian freighters, one civilian tug, in B-2101 (docked with the station)
- One *Lessara* carrier, with 12 *Razik* fighters, escorted by a *Mogortha* frigate, within 3 hexes of B-2506, speed 2, any heading
- Four *Llort Daggaden* Penetrators and two *Allovan* Attack Frigates, within 3 hexes of A-3027, speed 3, any heading
- Six extra Marine squads, placed at the player's discretion

## Neutral Forces:

- Two civilian standard freighters and one passenger liner, within four hexes of B-2205, any heading, speed 0. The crews are under guard by two Raider Marine units per ship. They are awaiting cargo unloading.
- Unknown Vessel Number One: One Ferengi *D'Kora* Marauder. Its Daimon is considering allying with the Raiders, and will fight with them if they seem to be doing well. Within three hexes of A-2428, any heading, speed 0.
- Unknown Vessel Number Two, Three, and Four: One Romulan *Ralaaram Ocala* Light Cruiser and two *Snipe* Frigates within four hexes of B-1804. They will remain cloaked and observe until they are convinced to join one side or the other. Some things that will cause them to pick a side:
  - Being fired upon will cause them to join the other side
  - If the Attacker can liberate the crew of one of the civilian vessels, presenting proof that the Raiders are Pirate Scum, the Roms will join the Attacker
  - If the Attacker destroys any of the apparently-civilian Raider vessels (such as the *Wolf Raider* or the civilian freighters docked at the station) before the target fires on them, the Romulans will decide that the Attackers are pirates and engage them.
  - Other possibilities exist at the whim of the player controlling the Romulans.

## Victory Conditions

- Score one point for each Raider combatant destroyed, two for each captured (no points for fighters, sorry, this applies to ships only)
- Score ten points for capturing the station
- Score five points for performing a "Rescue hostages" mission on the station's C&C (only if you are not able to capture the station – this represents strike teams arresting Raider leaders)
- Score three points for each Civilian crew liberated
- Score three points if peaceful contact is made with the Romulans
- Score two points if peaceful contact is made with the Ferengi (i.e., they do not join the Raiders)
- Subtract two points if the Ferengi join the Raiders
- Subtract three points if the Romulans join the Raiders
- Subtract one point for each attacking ship crippled
- Subtract two points for each attacking ship destroyed

## If the Total Score is:

- 20+: Clear victory for the Law
- 16-19: Those Raiders won't be bothering you again for a while
- 12-15: It's a good day to be a cop
- 6-11: Too many of 'em got away...
- 1-5: Well, you got some of the bad guys...
- 0 or less: You have been fired for incompetence. If you survived.

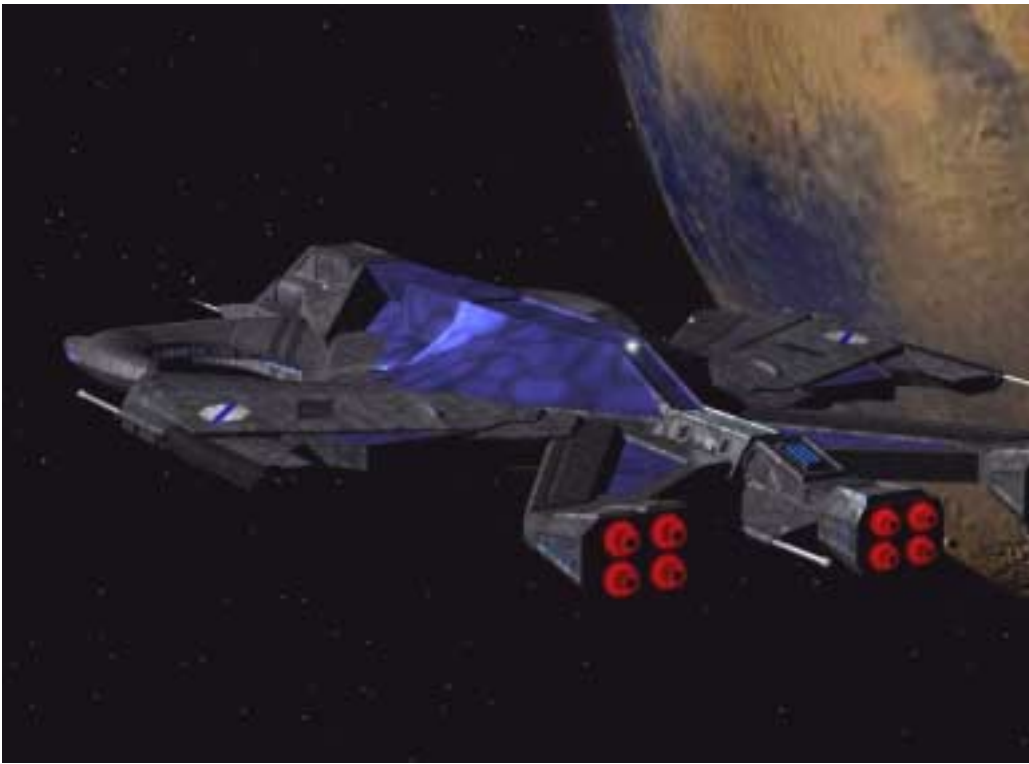
## Some Possible Variants:

Use alternate Raider ships (for example, an Orion base for an assault by Federation or Klingon ships)

Substitute other units for the Unknowns – use Orieni, Cylons, Sshel'ath, etc

Playtest with a race still under development for inclusion in Battleforce, like the Hydrans or Zentraedi.





**The Plan:** The Ar'tees and Por'fa'tis accelerate at maximum burn to get to the space station as quickly as possible; preferably before any fighters or shuttles are able to launch. Once in position, the Ar'tees use their plasma webs to envelop the entire space station and its surrounding hexes with plasma which should prevent any fighter or shuttle from launching.

The Por'fa'tis will circle to pick off any fighters that were able to launch and to keep any ships that put up a fight busy.

The squadron of Tra'shu'li will then approach and swarm any resisting ships and demand their surrender. This squadron will be

supported by Fuser and Mega-Plasma fire from the Pshul'shis if necessary.

Once all resisting ships have been pacified, and assuming the station isn't overly dangerous, then the three Pa'da'shar can leisurely board the station with their breaching pods and capture the leadership assuming they haven't surrendered already with no way to escape.

## The Battleforces

### Snack Time (Pak'ma'ra) by Todd Boyce

2 Pshul'shi (1700)  
10 Tra'shu'li (3150)  
3 Ar'tees (1200)  
3 Pa'da'shar (1050)  
12 Or'ti'nam Breaching Pods (480)  
18 Por'fa'tis (900)

8480 Points

**Constructing the force:** I really centered the force around the three Ar'tees. This may seem odd, but the reason is that they carry 3 Plasma Webs apiece which is at the core of my strategy. Naturally I also needed enough breaching pods and figured 3 Pa'da'shar should do the trick. Unfortunately, that means I now have 6 uncommon units on the field which necessitated taking the 10 Tra'shu'li (the minimum necessary). Finally, I decided on the Pshul'shi as the command ship and there was enough points to take two of them. An impressive threat to any who might think they could put up a fight.]

### Centauri Imperial Police – Special Weapons and Tactics by Hightower

Centauri Imperial Police – Special Weapons and Tactics (by Hightower)

Ok, first shot at one of these so any critique is welcome as I've actually never flown the Centauri and my in game experience is minimal to say the least.

#### *Command Group*

Dargan (750)

- 12x Rutarian (900)

Primus (830)

- 12x Senti (504)

2x Centurion (1,450)

Maximus (475)

7x Breaching Pod (350)

## *Wolfpack 1*

2x Demos (1150)  
2x Breaching Pod (100)

## *Wolfpack 2*

3x Mograth (1350)

## *Wolfpack 3*

2x Haven (650)

### **Tactics:**

#### *(Command)*

Hold back, using BLs to snipe and remove weapons on the station. Maxie will run goalkeeper for the bigger ships, hopefully helping to prevent the Cents and Dargan from losing all/most defensive weapons in the weapons exchange. Brought a Dargan for 2 reasons: 1) Ruties, 2) Ship ID since ELINTs have more chances to id those mysterious ships nearby.

#### *(Wolf-1)*

Close, use HAs to perform called shots on remaining weapons and/or engage any ships moving out to defend the station.

#### *(Wolf-2/3)*

These are loosely tied together. Moggies are more concerned with clearing any ships that appear out of the way. Havens are there to assist any Sentris with killing enemy fighters if they're out in force.

#### *(Fighters)*

Ruties - called shots on the station then anti-ship missions against known or ID'd enemy vessels

Sentri - keep the ruties alive with help from the Havens

BPs- after ships and enemy fighters have been cleared out a bit, BPs will move in and attach to the station to commence take over.

## **Sshel'ath Botheration by StarFury**

Time to even the score with some raiders!

8 Usula Assault Frigates (1600)

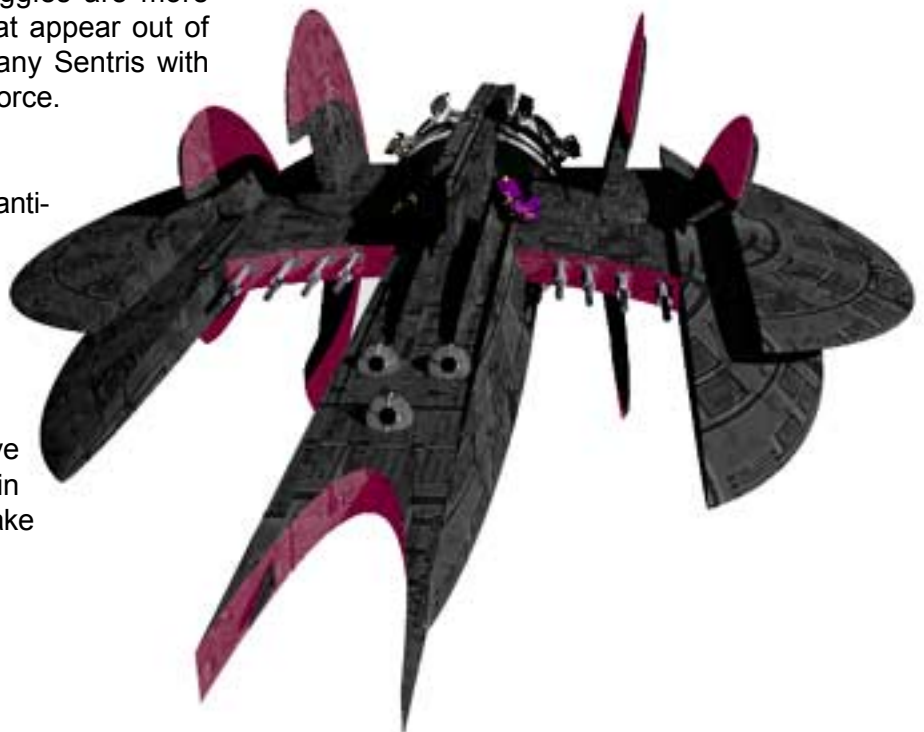
2 2018 Refit Vulshara Cruisers (1800)with Improved Sensors 90

2 Krasak Escort Carriers (1660)with improved sensors 90

60 Svarton Heavy Interceptors (2160)

2 Svehle Light Cruisers (960)with improved sensors 70

**Tactics:** Simple and quick. 4 Capital ships, 2 HCVs and 60 fighters are easily enough to deal with any unknown or raider threats foolish enough to deny our claim on this base. Each Usula Frigate has grappling claws and 10 marine contingents on board, presenting an array of targets for the enemy to deal with. The Krasak's EM torpedoes, the heavy and medium EM lasers carried on the Vulsharas and the Svehle combined with the new sensor improvements will allow good medium to short range fire causing massive EM disruptions in the enemies' systems, causing them to be less effective in targeting the incoming Usulas. Fighter superiority is assured with 60 medium fighters, as well the superb anti-fighter batteries mounted on the Krasaks and the Vulsharas. The extra speed imparted to the oncoming fighters will also surprise the doomed raiders.



## Minbari Response In Force by Dralafi

Sharlin: 1825

-24 Nials: 2544

-4 Ronati Breaching Pods: 280

-Total: 4649

Tinashi 1: 850

-2 Ronati Breaching Pods: 140

-Total: 990

Tinashi 2: 850

-2 Ronati Breaching Pods: 140

-Total: 990

White Star 1: 750

-2 Ronati Breaching Pods: 140

-Total: 890

White Star 2: 750

-2 Ronati Breaching Pods: 140

-Total: 890

Total fleet: 8409

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### The Plan:

After the fleet has jumped into the system all units will release their cargo. The Tinashis and Sharlin will form an outer perimeter and start raking the starbases outdefenses with 1-2 NLs per turn, depending on how aggressive the base really is and how well armed it is vs. fighters/shuttles. The white stars will advance along with the nials to pacify any other aggressive units in the area. Once no ships have been determined is hostile the nials and white stars will turn to the starbase and do the same thing as the Tinashis and Sharlins do, once the majority of the weapons are gone or crippled enough the 10 Assault flyers will begin their assault simultaneously. If the nials and white stars are having problems the Tinashis will join their cause if it is judged to be necessary.

If I loose the base or cripple it beyond repair... Oh well. I might have lost the scenario but at least no raiders will use it again...



## Drazi Territorial Incursion by Kizarvexis

The Drazi were incensed. Raiders preying on them. How low. How dispicable. Why the raiders should be working FOR the Drazi and preying on everyone else! :

### *Drazi Fist of Vengeance Force*

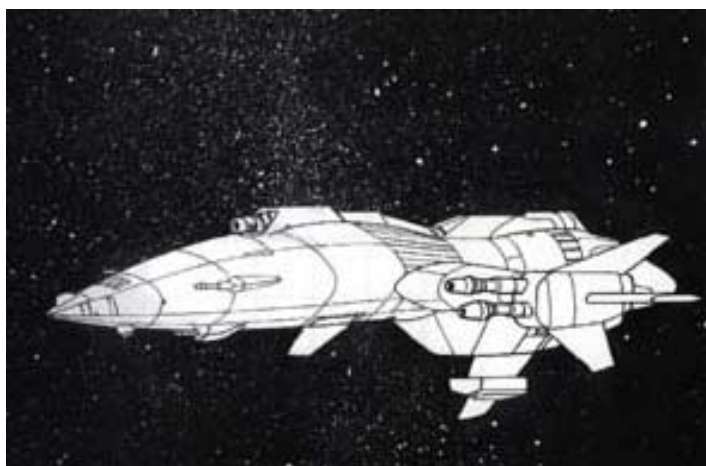
1 Stormfalcon Heavy Cruiser  
1 Srikebird Carrier  
1 Eyehawk Scout Cruiser  
1 Sky Serpent SHF  
24 Star Snake Lt. Fighters  
1 Claweagle  
6 Shallana Breaching Pods  
4 extra marine contingents

### *Drazi Assault Force Green*

1 Stormfalcon Heavy Cruiser  
1 Sweepmerlin Minesweepers  
1 Darkhawk Missile Cruisers  
1 Sky Serpent SHF  
12 Star Snake Lt. Fighters  
3 Shallana Breaching Pods  
8 Flash missiles  
2 Heavy missiles

### *Drazi Assault Force Purple*





1 Stormfalcon Heavy Cruiser  
 1 Sweepmerlin Minesweepers  
 1 Darkhawk Missile Cruisers  
 1 Sky Serpent SHF  
 12 Star Snake Lt. Fighters  
 3 Shallana Breaching Pods  
 8 Flash missiles  
 2 Heavy missiles

8,497 points total  
 40 marine contingents total

The Drazi Fist of Vengeance force jumps in first to fix the raider attention and to get good coordinates for the Green and Purple fleets. The Green and Purple fleets will jump into the edge of missile range and fire flash missile volleys to strip weapons from the base. The Green and Purple fleets will also carry the beachhead wave of Shallana BPs. While the FoV moves in tying up any ships, the Green and Purple fleets will disable the base and target any ships of opportunity. All fighters will perform fighter sweeps as they escort the BP to the Raider base. Once space superiority is achieved, they will move to anti-shiping strikes. The breaching pods from the FoV will go in with the Clawagle as a second wave. Any surviving breaching pods will move back to the FoV to pick up more marine contingents from the Stormfalcon. Any unknown ships will be warned to stay still and not target the Drazi. If they do, they will be allowed to leave after the battle. If they target (for two turns) and/or fire on the Drazi they will be treated as hostile forces. Once the base is secure any remaining BPs will move to all disabled ships for further boarding actions.

## For the Glory of Cardassia by Brigman

Hutet Assault Cruiser 800  
 Improved Sensors 90  
 8 Marine Contingents 80  
 Keldon Dreadnought 850  
 Improved Sensors 100  
 9 Marine Contingents 90  
 Keldon Dreadnought 850  
 Improved Sensors 100  
 9 Marine Contingents 90  
 Galor Cruiser 525  
 6 Marine Contingents 60  
 Galor Cruiser 525  
 6 Marine Contingents 60  
 Galor Scout Cruiser 650  
 6 Marine Contingents 60  
 Norin Light Cruiser 410  
 3 Marine Contingents 30  
 Norin Light Cruiser 410  
 3 Marine Contingents 30  
 Norin Light Cruiser 410  
 3 Marine Contingents 30  
 Brinok Missile Cruiser 650  
 8x Hideki Corvettes 1600  
 8500

### Tactics:

The Cardassian fleet will drop out of warp and hail the base, demanding its surrender. They will notify all nearby unknown ships that they must identify themselves.



Now that the niceties are out of the way... the Cardies will begin photon bombardment of any hostile ships, remaining at long range from the base. The Norins and Hidekis will screen the larger cruisers from enemy fighters. Once the mobile elements are dealt with, the Galors, Hidekis and Norins will perform strafing runs on the base, targeting key systems (read: long-ranged guns). Once it is safe to do so, the fleet will move to range-25 from the base, lower shields, and begin transporting troops over.

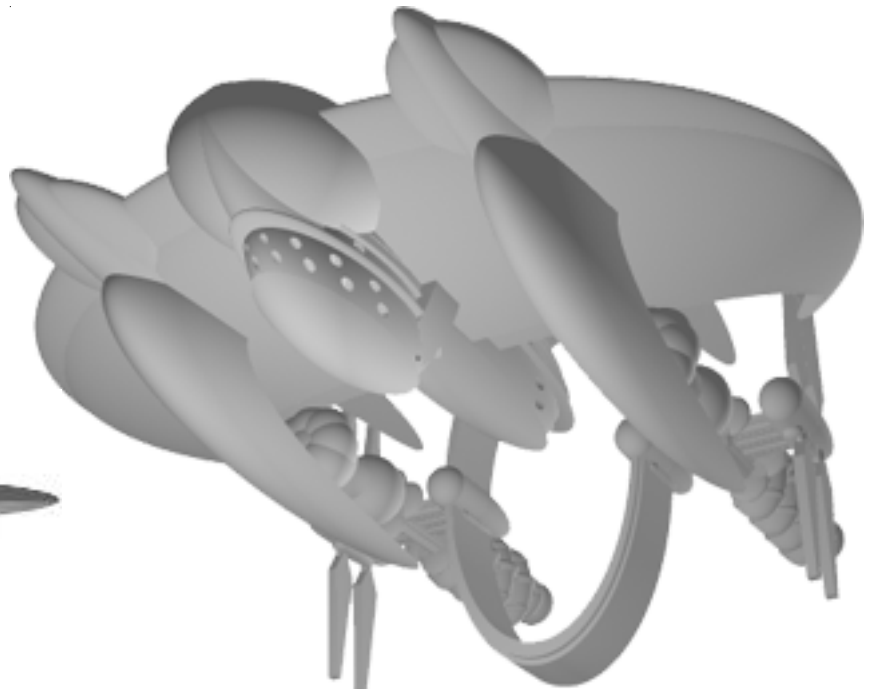
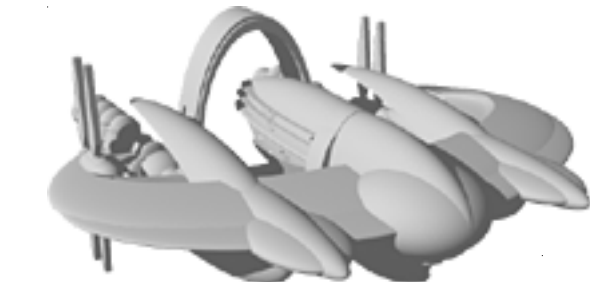
Many thanks to all who've enjoyed the Battleforce game over the past couple of years, and welcome to all our newcomers as well! The next scenario is already posted on the forums, so go ahead and submit your fleets

\* \* \*

## Escalation Wars Design Contest

Below are some renders of an Ingalli War era Ragalthan starship. I have several ideas for where their designs can go, but I want some feedback. So, what do you think? What springs into mind when you see these renders?

Post your thoughts on the b5wars.net Race Development Forums, and your ideas might become part of the Escalation Wars canon! The selected idea will appear next month, along with a slew of Courata and Vendrizzi ships (and renders!)



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*Original concepts and mechanics  
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## Coming Next Issue...



## MISSING PIECES

*(We're not kidding this time, really!)*

Next issue, we take a look at some of the ship submissions that have been building up over the summer! A new look at the Lumati and Antareans, the Star Fleet Battles Hydrans, and much more await you in the next issue of The Great Machine!

As always, remember to send your submissions to submissions@firenebula.com. You, too, may help solve a mystery! Oops, wrong program!

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**Submission Deadline: October 20, 2004**

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