

CAPTAIN'S LOG #40: SUPPLEMENTAL FILE

TOUGH AT FIRST, THEN EASY

Captain's Log #40 was done at the end of 2009, when we did not have a lot of pressure on the company and design team to do other things. That made it practical to have this file ready for release when copies went on sale to mail orders.

This issue was scheduled for mid-December, but when other projects got delayed to next year, we grabbed the chance to move this issue up into the coveted "Thanksgiving slot".

PUBLISHER'S NOTES

Captain's Log #40 was difficult at first due to (again) the lack of good front-page fiction. Randy O. Green came through for us at the last minute, and from that point it was just a matter of looking at the draft of the Table of Contents and doing whatever needed doing.

Steve Petrick and I have a plan to get the fiction for *CL#41* done before the end of December.

So, let's walk through the issue and let me share some background or other thoughts about things. I will give you some inside information, and that might be interesting. I can even discuss a few things that did *not* get into *Captain's Log #40* and a few that might be in the next one.—*Stephen V. Cole*

HISTORY

The history (fiction) section of an issue always sets the tone, not so much for the issue but for the company while doing it.

The Naure of the Beast: Randy O. Green is one of our best writers, and we're always grateful when he writes a story (as opposed to running off to Afghanistan like he has a tendency to do far too often.)

Wildspace: This issue had two fiction stories. Scott Moellmer (a valuable staffer we like to keep happy) wrote it, and it was an Omega story (we have printed far too few of those).

Snapshots: Strangely, as we did this issue, we did not have a single one of these "snapshot" articles on file. Given that we had two excellent stories, we saw no need to create one. At the last minute, Loren Knight and I stumbled into a great idea for one, but there wasn't time to do it or space to print it.

Class History: Players love these, and Stephen V. Cole hates writing them because they are *actual work* as he has to research every published story and scenario.

Developmental History: This issue completed the series of the development of heavy superiority fighters. Except that it did not. Expect a surprise final chapter next issue.

COMMUNICATIONS

News: Much of this page is standard and is repeated almost unchanged every issue because it is important information we need to keep in front of the customers and fans.

Star Fleet Awards: Some people think that handing out imaginary medals and campaign ribbons is just silly, but Steven P. Petrick and Stephen V. Cole take it quite seriously. They go to a lot of effort to make sure that everyone who worked on projects gets his hard work acknowledged and rewarded.

After Action: This section continued the change we made last issue. We used the space in the issue to tell *about* the products, and put the "every stupid comma we missed" stuff into this *Supplemental File*. This actually felt more "right" than before.

Command the Future: This is Stephen V. Cole's article to write as it is the strategic vision for the company. Pity he cannot shut up and promises too many products.

Input Guide: This page came to us from Jean Sexton more or less ready to publish. Jean is determined to teach all of you how to properly prepare material for publication.

Ten Questions: We don't do this article every issue, but we now have a system in place to compile interesting questions during the months prior to the issue.

Ten Things: This article came together as I continually got emails from players asking about things that were already on the website, but they didn't even know to go looking for them.

Why?: This page is kind of easy to do since I only have to go download the "Why?" questions from the BBS topic and answer them. I do this a few times a year and whenever we do a *Captain's Log* I just slice off as many as I need.

Proposals Board: We do not do this as often as we should, but did it this issue. From the looks of the BBS, we need to do a lot more of these to recognize the many creative ideas players have come up with, even if they cannot be used.

Starline 2400: This is, in some ways, the easiest page, and one of the most important. We just have to list the new miniatures we have done or are doing and show photos of them. I am glad to have Eric Olivarez as our Graphics Director, as nobody else can manage to take photographs that actually will print decently on the Kyoceras.

The Last Few Words: Funny, but we did not do that this issue. We were so happy with the issue that we just had nothing else to say.

FEDERATION COMMANDER

Communique: This is a fairly easy page, as we just have to compile news about recent and future products.

Tactics: We managed to get the long-lost article from Paul Scott. We have more victory articles on file for next issue.

Command Notes: These are your chance to show your tactical expertise and earn higher and higher rank.

Tournament: Mike Filsinger is crafting a new event structure for Origins, but it is not yet ready for publication.

Projects: Mike West always picks something good. This time, he brought the idea of simulator empires into *Federation Commander* for the first time. The Frax are a favorite of *SFB* players because they have new tactics but don't need new rules, and we're sure that *FC* players will enjoy them as well.

Email & On-Line: I am blessed to have Frank Brooks running our Play-by-Email system and Paul Franz running our On-Line gaming system. They do a super job. Each took over for an earlier head of his divisions and they have taken the divisions to new places to better serve our customers.

Scenarios: We have a bunch of *Federation Commander* scenarios on file, and with hard work by the authors, it is easier and easier to take what comes in and get it ready for publication. Please write more! *Federation Commander* is so much "cleaner"

than *SFB* that we can print three *FC* scenarios in the space it takes for one *SFB* scenario. We always try to have a good mix of writers, empires, and formats.

Borders of Madness: Mike West did something special; he converted the *SFB* rules for the stasis field generator (from the animated *Star Trek* episode) to *Federation Commander*.

SFB SCENARIOS

Steven P. Petrick is in charge of these, and he has a file of them ready to publish at any given time, although that file was not as “overstuffed” as it has been. We need more *SFB* scenarios, and this is an excellent opportunity to get your name published and earn a free issue of the magazine.

The first scenario is (usually) one to match the fiction story and cover art, and it is usually written by Steven P. Petrick (and then credited to the fiction story author). This one drove Steve crazy as he never intended the monster to be a real set of rules, just a vague opponent for an example article.

We call the scenario chapter the “Salami Section” since we can use as many slices as we need to fill the space. If somebody doesn’t do a promised article, we add his pages to the scenario chapter and go get another slice or two of salami. If somebody’s article is a page too long, we take that page out of scenarios and put a slice or two of salami back in the refrigerator.

When selecting scenarios from that file Steve Petrick has, we work from several criteria:

1. Lots of different authors.
2. As many different empires as possible.
3. At least something for our “fringe” areas such as the Omega Octant and the Magellanic.

When we get to the end of the available pages, the last scenario picked (not necessarily the last one in consecutive order) is the one that fits in the remaining space.

SFB DATABASE

The signature font for this chapter is Eras Bold.

Monsters: Steve Petrick does another monster in each issue, adding all of the rules to take that monster places the original scenario never envisioned. This issue, it was the turn of the Starswarm. Next issue he will be doing Banshees.

The Real Truth: These are special articles, not a continually generated series, and we did not have one this time.

Ask Admiral Growler: The way this gets done is dynamic. There is no “Growler for *CL#40* file”; there is simply “Growler we haven’t published yet”. People ask *SFB* questions in the BBS topics, Mike Filsinger answers them, Steve Petrick then sorts them into categories, Jean Sexton edits them, and Stephen V. Cole makes the final selections. Growler has its regular four pages this issue, but given the huge amount of this material on file, we selected two extra pages for the *Supplemental File*.

New Rules: We did not have one to publish and decided not to create one we didn’t need just to fill space. One player did submit a rule for this (on repairing ground vehicles during a scenario) but we decided that it was not needed.

Background Questions: This came out of a series of questions on the BBS, and seemed important enough to be published. Some of these show up in the “Why” topic and others show up in other topics, or are sent in by Email.

Brothers of the Anarchist: This issue, we published Chapter 20, and have at least six more to go.

Update for S8: Steve Petrick does an article of this type every issue, updating something that needs updating. This time, he updated the Patrol Scenario rules, although the project almost reduced him to tears more than once.

Example: Due to the short schedule, we simply did not have time to create an example article this issue. They take a *lot* of work to incorporate every possible twist and ramification, and a

lot of creativity to make that into an interesting story.

SFB TACTICS

Victory at Origins: This article finally arrived, and we published it. We have another one already finished for *CL#41*.

Primer: There is no law that says only Scott Moellmer gets to write these, but he does write them, and we are grateful to start the work on the tactics section every issue by asking “What is Moellmer doing this time?” If anybody else wants to write one, go ahead, as nothing says we cannot print two of them.

Term Papers: We had enough good papers for a decent section this issue, but we need players to submit more of them so we can rebuild this section to its former four-page status. We suffered a shortage of such papers when one player (who knew far less than he thought he did) took over the Term Paper submission topic and ran everybody else out of it by posting dozens of papers (half of which were wrong and most of the other half of which duplicated papers he had never read). He’s no longer allowed to post there, so please come back and post more!

Battlegroup: This has become one of the most popular articles, now that it has evolved away from accounting and into a primarily tactics article.

This issue’s tactical problem was unique, in that the players did not know when selecting their forces which kind of extragalactic invasion they would face.

The tactical problem for next issue is another unique one, in that the players must select a 550-point force for “general combat” without knowing the enemy *or* the mission.

STAR FLEET VENUES

The signature font for this chapter is Serpentine Bold.

Star Fleet Command: We continue to support the computer game that refuses to die. Jean Sexton updated the links in this list, as many of them keep changing.

Star Fleet Warlord: One of the oldest of the *SFU* campaign games, *Star Fleet Warlord* was begun by Bruce Graw and is now carried on by Paul Franz. The system continues to grow and improve and I’m happy to have him running it for us.

PBEM and On-Line: What Frank Brooks and Paul Franz do for *Federation Commander*, they have long done for *Star Fleet Battles*, and they continue to do it with style and grace.

Prime Directive: We avoid actually publishing RPG stuff in *Captain’s Log* since the RPG players refuse to buy an entire magazine just to get a page or two about RPGs. Instead, we promote the *Prime Directive* product line by publishing interesting background articles, such as this article I wrote for the *Klingons* book. Since Jean just updated that book to the d20 Modern rules, she felt it would be a good time to publish something from it.

Star Fleet Battle Force: We continue to publish playtest material from future expansions. We did commando ships in the last two issues. This issue, I asked players for ideas, and many of them asked us to formalize the rules outlined in *Captain’s Log #26*. Our webmaster, Eric Olivarez, is always looking for opportunities to expand and showcase his many talents, and he asked if he could “do some art” for this issue. I thought of the cards (which had some rather plain computer graphic patterns that I picked from the limited built-in patterns in Freehand) and told him to whip something up. His asteroids were breathtaking and his solution to the question “what does a radiation zone *look* like?” was uniquely creative.

Galactic Conquest: Probably the oldest and longest-running *SFU* campaign game, *Galactic Conquest* is the creation of John Berg, who continues to run it with his partner, Mike Incavo. Recently, they did an entirely new edition of their campaign rules, and ADB, Inc., was able to print them in hard copy for the first time. This issue provides a look at the two new universes which were created to use these much improved rules.

Reviews: We don't specifically recruit or solicit reviews of new Star Trek products, which may explain why no such reviews showed up and none were published in this issue.

Starmada: This was the first issue for this new product line. It took me some explaining to show Daniel Kast what kind of articles we needed, but he (like ADB, Inc.) has his own loyal fans who are active on his own BBS, and it didn't take him long to recruit people to write an example, a tactics paper, and a new scenario. Daniel is already asking "How soon do you want me to start on the *Romulan Armada* book?" and our answer is "Do you mean it's not finished yet?"

Battlestations Star Fleet: It looks like this project (which we have been talking about for two years) may finally go to press sometime during 2010, and we want you to be ready for it.

iPhone Games: Jay Waschak approached us some time ago, saying some friends of his at R2 Games wanted to do a lot of games for the iPhone and could they do games for the *Star Fleet Universe*. We agreed, worked out a contract (which was signed just hours before the issue was printed), and the rest is, well, on the road to publication. They actually have the first slider game working, but want to add more pictures to it. We expect to have this uploaded to the Apple Store by year's end.

FEDERATION & EMPIRE

The Front Page: This announces the new edition, *F&E 2010*, and (again) promises *ISC WAR* will be published "soon". You guys are probably about as tired of these unfulfilled promises as I am, but guys, Leanna has personally ordered that *F&E 2010* be published in the first quarter of 2010. (We have ten thousand dollars worth of brand new *F&E* counters in the warehouse and cannot start selling them without a new rulebook.)

We like to always have an interesting new rule, and this issue we found the computer-controlled ships rule and whipped it into shape.

Q&A: Mike Curtis answers questions on the BBS and sends Stephen V. Cole packages of answered questions and questions requiring rulings. Stephen V. Cole processes a few questions every week (well, every month ... well, now and then) and the result is three pages of *Captain's Log*. (This issue, one of those pages went to this *Supplemental File* but the Q&A on that page are just as legally valid as the other two pages.) Because *F&E* players cannot seem to use actual English, Jean added a list of abbreviations and jargon translations so that non-*F&E* players can at least read the articles when stuck in the bathroom or an airplane. Seriously, guys, you aren't going to attract new players if you require them to learn a foreign language before they can even read the rulebook!

F&E Proposals Board: The *F&E* game system finally got its own version of Proposals Board, citing some of the proposed new ideas on the BBS. With the new office time-management system, we should be processing proposals every month instead of randomly picking a few of them a week before the issue goes to press.

Tactical Notes: Prolific *F&E* players never stop writing them and we continue to publish them, but we need more of them. We have gone from having tons of leftover papers every issue to just barely finding enough to fill two pages.

F&E Why: The *F&E* game system finally got its own version of why, citing some of the questions asked.

Scenarios: We did not have one this issue because nobody wrote one or sent it to us. The scenario for CL#41 is reportedly well in hand and on track for publication.

New Ships: Romulan players now have more ways to convert Klingon ships, like they can afford them.

SHIPYARD

The signature font for this chapter is Eurostyle Extended.

Romulan F5W: Someone asked Steve Petrick to do variants for this ship, which created a challenge. History makes no mention of them, and the General War makes it difficult to explain how they could have been sent there. Steve Petrick did not want to change the history, but acknowledged that a lot of players are unhappy with "conjectural" ships. He set out to find (and found) a way to make these historical ships. Just a warning, but he has a lot more Klingon and Romulan F5W variants you will see in *Module R12*. It seems clear that with not enough X-technology available, all of the empires were going to need to fill out their devastated post-war fleets with new-built copies of the very best of their wartime designs.

New SFB Ships: The WYN LTT was a player request. The two clever Tholian police variants were submitted by Bart Pyle, the father of my godson.

New Federation Commander ships: The SFG-armed D7A came from Mike West's *Borders of Madness* rule. (Not much point in publishing SFG rules without publishing at least one ship with an SFG on it, right?) The three Frax ships (and three more in this *Supplemental File*) were also required by Mike West, as he brought the concept of simulator empires into *Federation Commander* for the first time.

We always reserve space for two hybrid SSDs, and these were supposed to be the Romulan variant of the F5W and the F5WL. Steve Petrick, however, was looking for SSDs to do, and did *SFBSSDs* for them, so there was no point in doing hybrids of them and throwing away work he had already done. I was going to just give the two pages to the scenario section, but a player asked for *Federation Commander* versions of the Old Galaxy pirates. This seemed perfect for hybrid SSDs, except that Steve Petrick had already done the *SFB* version of those as well. Jean Sexton suggested that I use the two pages for non-hybrid *FC* versions of those ships, and, well, that's what I did. Jean usually gets what she wants, so her slightest suggestion gets taken as a direct order out of force of habit.

New Klingon Armada ships: I asked Daniel Kast to provide a few extra ships. He consulted with fans on our Forum and his own BBS, and selected three war destroyers and the Federation NCL (war cruiser).

FINAL THOUGHTS ON CL#40

The new concept of doing *Captain's Log* based on a plan instead of crisis management worked well in this issue. Despite the short schedule, the plan worked.

For one thing, about half of the issue was done (as per the plan) before the final "goal line charge" began. (About a dozen pages of *Captain's Log #41* are already finished as I write this.) There are some parts of an issue that have to wait for the last minute (tournament reports, *SFBOL* updates, and the like), and there are some articles that take months to develop (such as Battlegroup and the Update series). There are others that accumulate over time (Growler, *F&EQ&A*, Why) and we don't want to finalize those "too soon" or there will be questions asked months before one issue that don't get published until the issue after that. However, there are also a lot of articles (*Anarchist*, Input Guide, Background Questions, some of the scenarios, Monster Special Rules, Tactical Primers, *Star Fleet Battle Force* playtest cards, *Prime Directive*, etc.) which can be written months in advance. We have made it a point to do so.

When we finally got beyond all of the other projects that had to be done first and could focus on *Captain's Log #40*, the plan stood us on good ground. Much had been done, and most of the rest had been at least started. The final work to complete the issue went smoothly, because we had planned ahead.

NOTES FROM THE STAFF

Many other creative people were involved in this and other projects, and they were invited to write a few lines, or paragraphs, or pages about their thoughts, experiences, and visions.

STEVEN P. PETRICK

Company Senior Vice President, head of SFB Division.

Once again fiction was a problem. Fortunately, just as we were starting to get desperate, Randy O. Green turned up with a story idea based on the example article I had written about labs in *Captain's Log #38*. Randy did his usual pretty good job, and SVC did a little polishing and sent it out for art, resulting in the exciting cover. I was left with a task I had not anticipated. When I did the example article, the monster did not need to be defined. I just needed it as an object to be examined, and to score damage both to eliminate the previous lab collection units (probe drones, shuttles, fighters) and damage the ship enough to require the use of Emergency Damage Repair (another lab function in combat). I also needed it to launch drones in order to allow me to define the drone identification operation of labs, (I skipped identifying mines as the example article was already much larger than the space I had allocated for it.) A second pass was needed to use the probes, although I suppose I could have just defined the action as being Turn #2 in the example, but I wanted to explain why probes could not be used on Turn #1.

Randy took the description of the damage the monster scored, and invented the Space Manta, and defined the Space Manta's drones as "parasites". As it is, there are some things I should have included somewhere in the scenario (the Space Manta is probably a size-class 2 monster, but might be size class 1, i.e., a lot further from the GVX than it appears to be due to its size). The "parasites" might be either size-class 6 fighters or size-class 7 drones. In any case, the scenario I wrote tried to be faithful to both the original intent of the example article, and to Randy's fiction.

This issue of *Captain's Log* was originally intended to be released in early December, and that was the basis for my planning. The change meant I did not have as much time for the graders to review the Term Papers, Tactical Notes, and Command Notes as I intended, but all of them rose to the challenge (thanks guys) and got their grades to me in good time. Those items were not, as result, any problem (and SVC was surprised that the files to pull from were ready to go when he asked for them).

Unfortunately that time element did impact the battlegroup article. Normally I try to allow enough time so that if I find a problem in a battle force while I am editing it, I can go back to author and say "fix this" or "what did you mean when you said...?", or "this tactic is illegal, would you consider trying this instead?" All of this adds to the editing time. This time around I had to reject one submission simply because there was not time to send it back to the author for the heavy revision it needed, and then reedit it. Still, we had enough to fill the space allocated for it, and came up with an idea for the next battle group article that should be interesting (no, I am not going to tell you what it will be here, wait and see).

We had a selection of scenarios that were almost all already approved (after having to create the Space Manta scenario), and much thanks to Nick Samaras for his many tests of the *Conquest's Gate* scenario. Note that it is not historical (although its background creates a historical explanation of why the Klingons did not, over a four-decade period, complete the conquest of the Hydrans). It just ties two incidents, both mysteries in their own rights, together in an effort to explain what might actually have happened. Of course, to really play the scenario historically, you would need a Klingon player who was a good sport, had never

seen *Module X1* (and hopefully not *Module J*, *Module J2*, or *Module Keither*), and thus had no idea what was going on. It is probable that historically the Klingon commander just ordered three cruisers to pursue the ship initially. After all, the approaching ship was only one cruiser with a few shuttles and some kind of small craft (in a year when shuttles did not even have phasers). Most Klingon players are going to know to take the whole fleet after the RNX, and that makes it a difficult fight, but still a good showcase of the differences between the two technologies, which was all it was intended to be.

As always, a special vote of thanks to Scott Moellmer for his efforts in providing tactical primers, but others should note that if they think they could write one for one of the empires that does not yet have one, they should take a shot. We will find room for good ones.

There was no example article for several reasons. First and foremost, no one asked for one. The other thing is that they are hard to write. SVC wants them to be more or less little fiction stories in and of themselves in describing the action, rather than simply explanations of the rule says this (as Mike Filsinger does in the Growler article; and much thanks to Mike for his time and efforts there). That always creates a problem because . . . well bluntly I am not a very creative person when it comes to writing things like that. Doing the example articles is, for me, real work, not finding the rules, but trying to make something that is acceptable to SVC (and hopefully to you readers if SVC likes it).

The Monster articles I pretty much start writing when the previous *Captain's Log* goes to press (just as I start collecting the Tactical Notes, Term Papers, and Command Notes at that time), so I am going to be starting work on Banshees in the near future. I do this primarily because, once again, I am not very creative. Working on the Monsters over a while lets me keep coming back with a slightly different viewpoint; I find that leaving it lets me think of other things to say. Oh, sure, doing the rules part is easy, but trying to explain how the monster works (why haven't all the Igneous Monsters been hunted down and destroyed? Same question for any other monster) is hard for me to invent, and invent in such a way that it is not simply a repeat of the previous monsters.

Well, I have yattered long enough. Even writing this is a tax on my ability to be creative and not to try to blow my own horn (which is why I hate writing these). I really do not like my name appearing all that often anywhere; I would rather others get the glory, not me.

JEAN SEXTON

Vice President of Proofreading and Product Professionalization, Prime Directive Editor-in-Chief.

The art for *Captain's Log* is always good, but when I saw Adam Turner's art for this issue, my jaw dropped and I just sat there and looked at it. What an amazing piece of art! And wouldn't you know, the inside lives up to the art. Randy Green's story was gripping and fun to read.

Scott Moellmer's story was the first article I had in hand. Guys, this story is one your ladies may well like. Your daughter or your wife (or your girlfriend, if you are still footloose and fancy free) might find this an accessible portal into the Omega empires and the *SFU*. No, I won't write more — you will have to discover it yourself.

The Input Guide this issue "just happened". Steve Cole wrote something about wondering what we would have in there and the first few paragraphs came to me. I sent them to him and asked if they were something he could use. His answer was "More!" and I obeyed.

I also have obeyed and continued the exploration of "The Olivette Roche Files". In this issue, you will find a write-up of yet another of Olivette's trivideos. Oh, those abused Hydrans! Who

will take pity on them?

I loved the instant messaging article from the first. I have some friends who use that and webcams to do play their role-playing games. These are people who are not long out of college (most were involved with computers) and I think they are on the edge of exploring a great way to play for people whose friends are not geographically local.

Steve Cole and Steven Petrick have continued to make strides in their writing. I am actually having to capitalize words! (Oh! The Horror!) I think we have found the best way to get my edits into the product. One of the Steves sits at the computer while they put me on speakerphone and I can tell them what I have marked. That way I can ask just what is meant or ask for a translation of jargon into English.

I do want to praise the folks who wrote the "Command Notes" as they had few purple marks throughout. Ted Fay's "Term Paper" only had four purple circles; both Dale Fields and Roger Morgan had fairly purple-free "Tactical Notes". I really like to see articles that are mostly correct, because then I can focus on word choice and style, rather than basic spelling and punctuation. I like for the words of "my writers" to "shine like the top of the Chrysler Building."

Finally, I want to thank you, the fans of the *SFU*, for being there throughout a trying year for me. It is always a pleasure to turn out products that I think you will enjoy. This year, your support made that possible.

CHUCK STRONG

Head of the Federation & Empire Division.

The year 2009 is all but done; where does the time fly?

We had another great Origins *F&E* gathering this summer marked with four full days, four outstanding scenarios, and nearly 30 participants; we may have to look at adding a fifth scenario next year if space allows. For those who have never been to Origins, now is the time to make a personal commitment to come and enjoy the comradery, the *F&E* working luncheons, and the combat clinics that encompass this premier event. If for no other reason, come to Origins to learn how to play the game better and correctly. I cannot tell you how many times I heard veteran players say that they didn't know one could do a given type of action or that they have been playing the game incorrectly because they didn't really understand a given rule. I believe you become a better player by playing against the very best players. *F&E* at Origins allows you to become a master player.

The *F&E* seminar was packed as we discussed the future of the game. ADB discussed the upcoming product lines as 2010 looks to be another watershed year for *F&E*. We discussed ADB's commitment to release an updated basic rulebook next year and then *ISC War* as soon as possible. We are all really looking forward to knocking out *ISC War* just as soon as practical; I look forward to kicking into high gear once *F&E 2010* is out-the-door. It's going to be a fight for "SVC time", but it's a fight I am personally committed to winning.

ISC War Update: We have many of the major rule sections written along with the notional OOB (which are available for review on-line). I have an outline for the Pacification scenario which looks to put pressure on the recovering General War empires to recover their economies while at the same time protecting their sovereignty from the aggressive pacifiers.

Scenarios authors! We need your help. We need to have submissions for small to medium-sized scenarios for inclusion into future *Captain's Logs*. Keep them on the smaller side as it is challenging enough to edit the monster scenarios and there just is never enough room to publish them. I'd also like to see some sort of creative submission for a capital-assault training scenario where players have hidden objectives and terms of victory. Another idea is to set up a displaced traditional empire within the

borders of the *ISC* map area. The bottom line here is that creative, quick, and simple scenarios have a greater chance for publication.

MIKE WEST

Head of the Federation Commander Division.

I am very happy that I had the opportunity to contribute not just one article, but two. The first article is the introduction of the Frax into the world of *Federation Commander*. The second article is the Borders of Madness article on the SFG.

The biggest reason for wanting to include the Frax is not because they are my favorite simulator empire, but because I just like the way they take existing technology, but express it in a way that gives a very different style of play. Plus, they are the oldest and most developed of the simulator empires and deserved to go first. As an extra bonus, more of their ships are provided in this Supplement.

The SFG rules were a challenge to translate into *Federation Commander*. They were streamlined to better fit into the system, but hopefully still retain the full character of the weapon.

ANNUAL DECEMBER MAIL ORDER BLACKOUT

We will "close for mail orders" at the end of 23 December 2009 and will not resume shipping mail orders until Tuesday, 5 January 2010. This is the annual "blackout" so that Leanna can finish the year-end accounting without having numbers (inventory, sales, royalties) moving around. We will be in the office, at least some of those days, answering phone calls and emails.

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