Meeting Engagements

When deploying your fleet for a meeting engagement, you must keep the following rules in mind: (1) All ships that belong to a single squadron must be deployed within 3 hexes of their command ship. (2) All squadron commanders must be deployed within 15 hexes of the group flagship. (3) Flagship escorts must be deployed within 3 hexes of the flagship.

Before any player begins deploying his fleet, all players must secretly determine what their fleet speed was last turn and note this in the appropriate area of the squadron control sheet. The fleet speed is announced by all players after all squadrons have been set up on the board. When possible, fleets should begin 45 or more hexes apart with a speed of 10 or less.

Jump-In Scenarios

In the Babylon 5 Universe, ships move strategically using jump engines. These engines open a jump point, or *vortex*, into an alternate dimension called *hyperspace*. While in hyperspace, movement between star systems is possible, as the distances are much shorter. Hyperspace travel can be dangerous, however, so fixed *jump gates* are often used. These provide beacons that friendly fleet elements (as well as civilian traffic and units without their own jump engines) can use to move into and out of hyperspace. In most space battles, however, ships arrive on the map (and later leave it) using their jump drives.

Jumping into a system requires a different set of deployment rules. At the start of the game, the player jumping in must determine how many of his ships with jump engines are going to open vortices and if the group is going to utilize a jump gate (if one is present). He must also secretly determine the flagship's jump-in hex. Once this is done, the defending player must deploy his entire fleet. They may deploy anywhere on the table, but must be moving at a speed of 4 or less. The rules for deploying the defending fleet are the same as a meeting engagement except that 25% of the defending squadrons must be detached and "on patrol." These squadrons may be at any location on the board and may have an initial speed of up to 10, but must be at least 20 hexes away from the group flagship.

Once the defending fleet is placed, the jump-in location for each vortex must be determined. This is done randomly, although some races (such as the Minbari) have some control over jump-in placement. The player jumping in the flagship's jump-in hex and announces the direction the jump points will be pointing (all jump points will open in the same direction). After designating a hex side as direction #1 (usually towards the top of the map), he rolls a d6 and a d12. The d6 indicates a direction (clockwise from direction #1) and the d12 indicates how many hexes. This is the location of the flagship's actual jump vortex. From here, you must determine the location of each of the remaining jump points. To do this, choose a location for each jump point within 10 hexes of the flagship's actual jump point. After all squadron jump points have been chosen, roll a d6 for distance and a d6 for direction for each one. This is where each jump point actually forms. When using Minbari only roll a d6 for the flagship vortex distance, and a d4-1 for the other vortices' distance (a result of 0 means the jump point does not shift).

If a jump gate is located in the system under attack, a jumping fleet can elect to use the gate as a anchor for their jump-in coordinates. When this is done, there are no random rolls. Instead, the player jumping in must specify in what hexes his jump points form. Because of the solid navigational reference the gate beacon provides, there is no error in jumping -- the player places all of his jump points exactly where he wants them. However, all the jump points will open in the same direction as the gate itself. The decision to use a gate as a point of reference must be made BEFORE the defending player places his fleet and is done so in secret.

When one fleet is jumping in, the defending player gets one turn to maneuver his fleet to meet the attack (he has a chance to respond as the vortices form). During this turn he may begin deploying fighters and accelerating to a combat speeds. No weapons fire may occur during this turn. Also, during this turn the defending player does not need to plot the movement of his squadron commanders (see the *Movement* rules hereafter).

During the first turn of the game, the attacking player uses the jump-in hex for the squadron as his first point of movement. A single jump point will allow one full squadron to pass through it a turn. The ship that opened the gate

must be the last ship to move through the gate. As soon as the ship that opened the gate moves through it, the gate will close. Ships from a single squadron can only enter through a gate opened by a ship in their squadron. A single squadron can use multiple gates to enter the battle area. The fighters of a squadron may all use any vortex created by their squadron. After jumping in, all ships within a single squadron must be within 2 hexes of the squadron command ship after all movement is completed. After this point, the game proceeds normally.

The player jumping in may, if he wishes, allocate some of his group to jump in at a secondary jump point. If this is done, they may also choose to arrive on a future turn of the game, though this is optional. This second set of ships will jump in using this secondary primary jump point. Note that these do NOT count as reinforcements, will arrive when scheduled, and do not grant any discount for their purchase. See *Reinforcements* later in these rules for more information on this procedure.

TURN SEQUENCE

In reality combat occurs in a constantly changing environment, with no pauses to allow a commander to assess the situation, make his decisions, and relay his orders. In a game, however, pauses are a necessity. *Fleet Action* games are therefore split into a series of *turns*, with each turn further broken down into *phases*. This *turn sequence* is described below.

Pre-Turn Decisions
During this phase of the turn, players must make a series of decisions including where to move each of their squadrons, how to use ELINT electronic warfare support, and so on. The exact rules for these procedures are provided later in this book.

Energy Mine Launch
Some Narn ships mount energy mines that use a special firing procedure. If a ship is going to launch these weapons, they do so at this point in the turn, before any movement or firing is done. All launches must be announced publicly, though the exact target hex need not be revealed until after movement is complete.

Action Phase
This is the longest portion of the turn. During this phase, all ships move as planned in the Pre-Turn Decisions Phase. Movement is done in a series of three *pulses*, with players able to fire weapons in each pulse after all movement.

There are some weapons that can fire multiple times during a turn. In all cases, a single weapon system must wait a minimum of one pulse between firings unless it can fire three times per turn. This extends between turns. Thus, for example, if a ship fires a two-per-turn weapon on pulse three of turn two, it could not fire that weapon again until pulse two of turn three.

Ballistic Weapons Detonation Phase

This is a subphase of the Action Phase of the turn.

Ballistic weapons can impact at different points during the turn, depending on how far they were fired. Unless otherwise specified, the ballistic weapon will reach its target in a number of pulses equal to the distance it is fired divided by fifteen plus one (rounding any fraction up). Thus, for example, if an ion torpedo is fired at a target 21 hexes away, it would hit in 3 pulses (21 / 15 = 2 + 1 = 3). Thus, in this example, if it was launched in pulse one it would impact in pulse 1 of the next turn. This means there will always be a two-pulse delay between the launch and impact of any ballistic weapon unless it is fired at range 0 in which case it will be one pulse before impact. It is possible for ballistic weapon to be in flight between turns. Note that during the impact phase, they will hit their targets before any fire or movement occurs, a significant advantage.

Determine Morale

Any checks against morale must be made at this point. See the Morale rules below for details on how to do this.

Check for Reinforcements

If one side or the other is expecting reinforcements, the arrival check is made at this point in the combat sequence. See the appropriate section of these rules for further details.

Check for Victory

The final step in the turn is to determine if any one side has achieved any specific victory conditions as outlined in the scenario. If not, then proceed with the next turn. Note that any reinforcements that have not yet arrived do not count in any way for computing victory. Thus, if a player looses his entire fleet before the reinforcements arrive, he has lost the game even if the reinforcements were to out number his opponent. If the roll should indicate that the reinforcements arrive the next turn, the game will continue.

PRE-TURN DECISIONS

Before beginning a turn, players must make a number of decisions on how their ships will operate and move. These decisions are all made in secret and recorded in the appropriate spots on the sheets. Each of these steps are detailed below.

Give Squadron Movement Orders

The first thing you must do is give each squadron its movement orders. This is done by noting the squadron command ship's movement route on the movement grid located on the squadron command card.

Within Fleet Action, squadrons move and operate as one unit. However, only the exact movement path of the squadron command ship is important. More details on this are given in the *Movement* section of these rules.

There are a number of different types of movement that a ship can undertake. The options available are based on the type of ship and its current speed. Below is a general description of the various types of movement. They are explained in more detail in the *Movement* section of these rules.

Maintain Course: Ships that are maintaining course may only move along a straight line without changing speed or heading. A ship limited to maintaining course may slip once to the left or right (but not both).

Accelerate/Decelerate: These two type of movements occur when a squadron either speeds up or slows down. The ships face the same limitations as they do when maintaining course.

Turn Port/Starboard: Turns to port/starboard indicate the ship may alter their course by 1 hex side left (port) or right (starboard). Vessels may only change direction by one hex side under this maneuver, no more.

Accel/Decel to Port/Starboard: These four movement types combine the Accel/Decel and the Turn Port/Starboard movement types.

Turn Hard to Port/Starboard: These two movement types occur when the squadron makes two hexside turns to port or starboard. These two turns can be made at any point during the squadron's movement. They can also turn one hexside to port and one to starboard. They may not turn more than two hex sides over the course of their movement.

Accel/Decel Hard to Port/Starboard: These four orders combine the Accel/Decel order and the Turn Hard to Port/ Starboard order.

Come About: This orders the squadron to make a complete 180-degree turn during their movement.

Correct Course: This order allows the squadron to turn once to port/starboard, move a short distance, than turn back on their original heading. This is generally used by larger ships that may not normally be able to make a hard turn (above).

A vessel's category will limit what movement type it may use in conjunction with the *Accel/Decel* movement type. If a squadron is made up of vessels from different categories, it is limited to only orders that all ships in the squadron may execute. Thus, if a squadron were made up of G'Quan Heavy Cruisers and Thentus Frigates, you would be limited by the maneuverability of the capital ship (it is for this reason that squadrons normally all contain the same basic type of

ship). The chart on indicates what movement types may be combined with the *Accel/Decel* type by category. Note that there may be some exceptions. The information on the ship datacards always takes precedence over the chart shown here.

All squadrons must be given their movement orders before the turn commences. To do this, simply note the route the squadron will take on the squadron movement form. Only the path of the flagship need be plotted--the exact movement path of the remaining members of the squadron need not be specifically defined. An example of a movement path plot is shown on the previous page.

FLEET COMMAND AND CONTROL

In the large fleets simulated in Fleet Action, command and control are of paramount importance. Fleets with a properly set up command network tend to operate more smoothly and efficiently. This translates directly into improved performance in combat situations. Maintaining your command networks is an important task for any fleet commander.

There are, in general, three levels of command in any fleet. The top level is the group flagship. This is where many of the orders will originate, including movement orders to the various squadrons and special targets. The next level is the squadron commander. Commanders at this level generally designate primary threats and target packages for the ships under his command. The final level of command is the ship captain. The captain will handle the details of his ship and does not concern himself with anything beyond his own hull (and the orders he recieves from his superior). In truth, there is one other level of command, the fleet level. However, this high level of command is rarely brought in to play within this game as fleet commanders generally serve in a more strategic role.

Command Radius
The effective operation of a squadron requires highly coordinated movements and weapons fire from the member ships. In addition, the command networks that enable a squadron to operate as an effective fighting force are vulnerable to jamming and interception by enemy vessels. Because of this, squadrons of ships will operate in relatively close proximity to one another at all times. A squadron commander has a command radius of five hexes. That is, all ships within the squadron must, at all times, stay within five hexes of their command ship. If a ship should move beyond this range, it is considered to be *out-of-command* on the following turn (see below).

Optional Rule: Each race has a different command radius (not always 5 hexes as noted previously). Earth and Narn have a command radius of 4, Centauri is 5 and Minbari is 6.

Group command ships are generally designed with this duty specifically in mind and have specialized equipment installed for command and control purposes. Because of this, there is no limit on how close or far a squadron commander must be from the fleet flagship. A squadron commander is always considered within the fleet command radius unless the flagship itself is destroyed (the effects of this can be devastating to the fleet and are detailed later in this section).

Special Command Orders
Fleet admirals and squadron commanders may, if the ability is paid for, utilize one or more special abilities. Some of these abilities may only be used once during a game unless state otherwise, and no commander may ever use more than one ability per turn.

Squadron Commander Abilities
Each of the abilities listed below must be purchased to be available for use in the game. A commander may only buy a number of abilities equal to 25% (round down minimum of 1) of the command rating of the ship they command from. Thus, a ship with a command rating of 3 could purchase one special ability for its commander.

Rapid Net Change: Should the squadron commander's ship be destroyed, the fleet commander is quick enough to change the command net over to another ship so as not to interrupt the command network. The squadron will not suffer any out-of-command penalties for the loss of the command ship. This ability may only be purchased once. This may not be purchased for the fleet flagship.
Cost: 250 points

Improved Command Network: The commander has enough clout to get improved command gear installed on his ship. The ship may now has a 25% increase (round any fraction up) in his command rating. This ability may be purchased once. Should the command ship be destroyed and the new command ship not have the CR ability to absorb the entire squadron network, then any excess ships become a squadron of their own (with a flagship defined by the player at that point), but will always suffer a 25% reduction (round up) in firepower ratings as they are now outside the fleet network. This may not be purchased for the flagship for purposes of determining the fleet command rating.
Cost: 75 points per extra command point gained

Command Reorganization: Should ships fall out of command in the fleet, the commander may integrate them into his command network if they are within command at the start of a turn and the commander has the opening in his command net. This may be used multiple times during a game by the same commander.
Cost: 50 points

Stubborn: The commander will rarely retreat. Any failed morale roll may be rolled again. The second result stands. This ability may only be used once per purchase. Thus, if purchased 3 times, the commander can have 3 re-rolls during the scenario.
Cost: 100 points

Ex-Fighter Ops Commander: The squadron commander at one time served as a Fighter Operations Commander and as such has a better understanding of fighter operations. This commander may change the orders of fighters from his squadron every turn instead of every other turn. This ability may not be purchased by the Task Group Admiral for use on a group scale. A group commander may only use this ability for fighters from his squadron.
Cost: 300 points

Task Group and Fleet Admiral Abilities
Fleet Admirals may use any of the normal command abilities but may issue the order to any squadron in the fleet unless specified otherwise. They also have a set of unique abilities as described below.

ELINT Priority Support: The Fleet Admiral may order any ELINT vessel in his flag squadron to support another squadron whose command ship is within 15 hexes of the flagship.
Cost: 100 points

Superior Strategic Planner: The Fleet Admiral is an excellent strategic commander. As such, reserves never fail to appear when scheduled. No roll is needed to see when reserves arrive. They will arrive on the appropriate turn.
Cost: 50 points per 500 actual points of reinforcements

Clout: The FA has more clout with High Command than normal. As such, ships that are normally of limited availability (such as ELINT) may be purchased in unlimited quantities for the fleet. Note this does not alter fighter loads.
Cost: 75 per ship purchased outside the normal limits

Superior Tactical Planner: The FA is an excellent tactician. As such, after initial deployment but before the game begins, the Admiral may move one or more squadrons up to10 hexes from their initially deployed position. The total number of hexes shifted may not exceed 10 hexes in total. The squadron may move beyond the normal 15 hex restriction.
Formations may not be altered.
Cost: 75 points

Squadron Commander Styles (Optional Rule)

Not all commanders have the same opinions on how to use their fleets. Some commanders prefer to be much more aggressive than normal, while others will prefer to fight from a more defensive-oriented stance. The rules below enable you to simulate both of these types of commanders.

At the start of a battle, each player should roll a d10 for each squadron in his fleet and consult the table shown here. This will indicate what command style the commander of that particular squadron will fight in.

Defensive: The squadron commander prefers to "play it safe." As such, he has configured his squadron for better defense at the cost of some offensive capability. All ships in the squadron have a one higher defensive rating but one lower sensor rating.

Standard: No change from the standard ships.

Offensive: The squadron commander is somewhat "gun happy" and likes to dive in. All ships have a one higher sensor rating but one lower defensive rating.

Out of Command

There are basically three ways for a ship to fall *out of command* (OOC). The first is to be beyond five hexes of its squadron commander at the end of the turn. The second way is for the squadron commander to be destroyed during the turn. The final way is for the fleet flagship to be destroyed. The exact effects of each are indicated below.

Ship is Beyond Command Radius

A ship beyond the command radius at the end of a turn will be OOC during the next turn (and thereafter until it gets back into position). During this period, the ship may not contribute its firepower when the squadron fires at a target. The ship may fire on its own, but must do so after all other fire has been resolved and after damage effects are applied to the various targets. In addition, the ship fires at only half the indicated rating. (round up).

Squadron Commander is Destroyed

If a squadron commander is destroyed, the squadron will suffer penalties during the following turn. All fire from the squadron is at 50% the indicated rating (round fractions up). Thus, if a ship in the squadron would normally be able to fire its lasers with a 4x rating, they would now only fire with a 2x rating. In addition, the squadron will gain no effects from squadron level benefits during the turn. At the end of the turn a new squadron commander must be designated. This will generally be the ship with the highest command rating, though this is not always the case (e.g., if that particular ship is already severely damaged). It must be a ship with the ability to command all the ships remaining in the squadron. If no such ship exists, then the ship that can command the most units should be designated. Any extra ships will be considered out of command for the remainder of the game, unless they are reorganized into another squadron (a special ability).

Fleet Flagship is Destroyed

If the fleet flagship is destroyed, the effects are felt fleet-wide. On the next turn, the following restrictions are placed on the fleet as a whole. First, no fighters may be given new orders. (If a squadron of fighters on a strike mission should kill off the last ship in the target squadron, they will attempt to rejoin a squadron and act as escort until new orders are received.)

The second effect is that the enemy may choose one movement pulse in which the affected player must move all of his ships first. Note that the enemy must still follow general movement orders given at the start of the turn, but now they may be able to capitalize on the confusion within the enemy's fleet. The pulse this will be done on must be determined at the start of the turn while movement orders are being issued. In general, this will allow the squadrons to reposition key ships for maximum fire power easily. In this case, the repositioning occurs after the enemy fleet has moved.

Finally, all ships in the fleet will fire at 75% of their normal combat ratings (round any fractions up). This is cumulative with the effects of any squadron commanders lost simultaneously. For example, if a squadron has lost its commander and its fleet flagship, its weapon ratings are first multiplied by 0.75 and then by 0.5, and then fractions are rounded up. For example, a weapon with a 4x rating would first go to 3x and then to 1.5x, rounding up to 2x.

At the start of the next turn a new flagship must be designated. This is chosen from the squadron commander with the highest command rating. If this ship does not have the ability to command the entire fleet, he must designate which squadrons are going to be directly under his command. Any remaining squadrons will be left to operate on their own and will operate at 75% of their normal combat levels until room exists in the command net. At that time they will operate normally.

MOVEMENT

In Babylon 5 Wars, you must track how quickly a ship can turn, whether or not it is pivoted or rolled, and the amount of thrust it can spend. In Fleet Action, movement instead represents the overall maneuvering of a large fleet and is more strategic in scale. As such, the movement system is quick and simple, with players only concerned with the general speed and direction of their ships.

A ship's movement depends on the orders its squadron has received. Moreover, the least agile ship in the squadron limits the orders a squadron can execute, as mentioned earlier in this book. Below, each movement order, and the rules that govern that order, is detailed. An illustrated example of each move is also shown for each order. Note this example shows various ways of making the maneuver and does not represt an entire squadron.

Ship Movement Characteristics

The exact maneuvers a ship can perform at a given speed are indicated on its control sheet. In all cases, the data on the control sheet takes precedence over any charts printed in this book.

Below is a description of each of the possible maneuvers and how they are performed with an illustrated example of the maneuver. These illustrations show various ways the maneuver can be performed and do not represent an entire squadron. Rules for exactly how to maneuver a squadron are given later in this book.

Accelerate/Decelerate
A ship may accelerate or decelerate as indicated by its stats on the datacard. Accelerating and decelerating take up a lot of the ship's thrusting capabilities and will severely limit other maneuvers it is able to perform. In general, the larger the ship, the less it will be able to do while accelerating or decelerating. The chart on page 13 indicates these limitations.

Maintain Course
Ships limited to maintaining course may not alter their heading. They may, however, slip one hex either left or right during the course of their movement (see illustration). They may not slip both left and right, only one or the other. All ships can accelerate or decelerate while maintaining course.

Turn to Port/Starboard
This maneuver enables a ship to alter its current heading by one hex-side either left or right (but not both). A ship cannot perform a side slip if they make a turn. Heavy combat vessels and medium ships may also alter their speed when performing this maneuver.

Turn Hard to Port/Starboard

A *hard turn* indicates that the ship is making a turn two hex-sides in the same direction. This can be done at any point, and the change can either be combined in one turn or done at different points of the move. Ships cannot sideslip when using this maneuver. Medium ships may alter their speed while performing this maneuver.

Come About

A ship that can *come about* has the ability to turn up to 3 hexsides in the same direction (i.e., it will turn around and face the opposite direction). Ships cannot sideslip while performing this maneuver. The ship may make the turn in any manner it wishes. Thus it may turn all three hex-sides at one time or make a wider turn over the course of the turn. No ship may alter its speed while performing this maneuver.

Course Correction

A *course correction* allows a ship to move a significant distance in one direction or the other without altering the actual final heading of the squadron. You could, for example, turn right, move forward several hexes, and then turn back left. Ships course correcting cannot sideslip. They must always end their movement heading in the same direction that they began the movement. This is considered a hard turn for purposes of accel/decel limitations.

When ships are accelerating or decelerating, it is assumed that this occurs before any other movement unless specified in the movement orders.. Thus, if a ship were traveling at a speed of 12 and were given a decelerate order, it would move at a speed of 11 or less (depending on how much it decelerates by). It is possible to change speed at some point other than the beginning of the turn. When this is the case, the maneuvering limitation of the ship is based on what the speed of the ship is during any given pulse. This makes it possible for a ship moving at a slow speed to make a tight turn then accelerate to a speed later that would not have allowed the maneuver. However, as the accleration or decleration of a ship is assumed to take place over the course of the turn, if a ship does not perform the speed change in the first pulse then its *Accel/Decel* rating is reduced by two for every pulse(or fraction thereof) that the speed change is delayed. Thus, if a Thentus were to wait until the 2nd movement pulse it would only accelerate by four, not its normal six.

That is all there is to Fleet Action movement. It has been kept as simplistic as possible so as not to slow the game down even when there are large numbers of figures on the board.

Squadron Movement Procedures

When moving commences, players alternate moving their squadrons until all players have moved. On even numbered turns, the attacking player moves first. On odd turns the defending player moves first. Players may choose to move any squadron within the order guidelines on the monitor shown here.

If several movement categories on this list are applicable, the squadron moves in the most unfavorable one. Thus, if a squadron has an ELINT vessel but lost a member of its squadron, then it would move in the second group, not the last one.

These are not segmented movement groups. That is, if a one side has squadrons that lost ships and the opposing side does not, the first side would not have to move all of his squadrons that lost ships before his opponent moved any squadrons. Instead, the opponent would begin moving squadrons without ELINT support immediately.

If one side has more squadrons to move than the other, then care should be taken to even out the movement. For example, side 'A' has three squadrons while side 'B' has six. Side 'B' should move 2 squadrons for every one that 'A' moves. As another example let us assume side 'A' has four squadrons. If side 'A' is moving first movement would go:

A: 1   B: 2   A: 1   B: 1   A: 1   B: 2   A: 1   B: 1

If side 'B' had were moving first it would go:

B: 1   A: 1   B: 2   A: 1   B: 1   A: 1   B: 2   A: 1

Plotting the Squadron Commander's Movement Path
As noted earlier in these rules, players must pre-plot the movement path of each of their squadron command ships (this includes the flagship). The exact path the remaining ships in the squadron take is unimportant, as it is assumed that they will keep in formation with the squadron commander.

The command ship may only plot manuevers that the slowest ship in the squadron may follow at the squadron's current speed. Therefore, if a squadron of Narn heavy cruisers were being commanded by a Thentus Frigate, the frigate's movement would be restricted to that of the heavy cruisers. It is not possible to give slow and clumsy ships better maneuverability by putting a small, agile ship in command of them.

Squadron Members
The members of the squadron are assigned a formation position at the start of the game during set-up. This can easily be done on the hex grid provided on the squadron control sheets. Unless the squadron commanders orders a change, the squadron members could potentially maintain this position throughout the game. Rules on how to alter a squadron's formation are given later in these rules.

Movement of a Squadron
When moving a squadron, the player should first move the command ship as indicated on his plotted movement. Next simply pick up the other members of the squadron and place them in their appropriate positions.

Once per turn, the squadron commander can order a single ship to alter its current location. A ship may be shifted a number of hexes equal to half of(round up) the lowest number of hexes the ship will move in a single pulse that turn. This announcement must come before any ships are moved and occurs immediately.

A squadron commander may also order his ships to move in formation *relative* to his position. When this is done, each member of the squadron follows the exact same movement path that is plotted for the commander's ship. Thus, if the command ship has been plotted to move forward three hexes then turn one hex-side left and move another two hexes forward, each ship in the squadron would perform this maneuver exactly. By moving *relatively* instead of *absolutely* (as is the normal movement mode for squadrons), the squadron commander can more easily keep himself screened by members of his command.

The Movement Pulses

Each turn there are three movement pulses. During each pulse, it is possible for all players to fire weapons after movement. Keep in mind that while there are three distinct movement pulses, players must pre-plot the movement for all three of these pulses during the *Pre-Turn Decisions* partion of the turn.

The speed of a ship indicates how far it will move in each pulse. Faster ships will move further each pulse. Ships that are traveling slow enough may not move in every pulse, though they still have an opportunity to fire. The chart to the right indicates what speeds move and how far during each pulse. If ships are traveling at velocities greater than 20, simply follow the pattern on the chart.

Ships that are accelerating or decelerating may do so during any pulse of the turn. However, if they do not do so during the first pulse of the turn the limitations detailed earlier in this book must be adhered to. Unless noted otherwise, a ship's change in speed is assumed to occur in pulse #1, before movement. To indicate otherwise, a note should be placed on the movement orders specifying on which pulse the ship will alter its speed.

COMBAT

The ultimate goal in any engagement is to do as much damage to the enemy while taking as little damage as possible in return. This is achieved through a combination of superior tactics, maneuvering, and weapons fire. Learning to maximize the strengths of your ships while minimizing their weaknesses is the mark of any good commander. Likewise, learning to form your various ships into a cohesive force is an important skill. Commanders who use their escorts in attack roles or refuse to commit some fighters to the defense of the fleet over attacking the enemy will lose most engagements they are involved in.

Reading a Ship Record Sheet

Like movement, combat in *Fleet Action* is much simplified from *Babylon 5 Wars*. The exact weapon arc of a particular weapon is not as important as the overall firepower the ship can project into a particular zone. Exactly how many interceptors an Omega Destroyer has does not matter, only that it has them and they work. The record sheets have been designed to provide nearly all the information a player will need during a battle, reducing the necessity of looking up information in the middle of the fight.

Combat Statistics

There are several statistics that relate directly to the combat abilities of a ship. These statistics are defined below.

Def Rating: This is the defense rating of the ship. The higher this number, the more difficult it is for enemies to hit the target.

Armor: The armor of a ship represents how hard it is to damage the ship after a hit is achieved. The higher this number, the more difficult it is to damage the ship. On capital ships the armor is represented as three numbers separated by slashes. The first number is the armor to the front. The second is the armor from the side. The final number is the armor rating for the aft or rear of the ship. Heavy combat vessels use two numbers, one for forward, one for aft. Medium and smaller ships only have one armor rating.

Sensor: This is the sensor rating for the ship. The higher this number, the better the sensors are on the ship.

Weapon Statistics

There are two distinct parts of the weapon statistic diagram. The first is the actual stats for the weapon. The second shows the weapon system's ability to project fire into each arc (details on how to read the arc are provided later). Each of the stats are defined below.

Class: This indicates the class of the weapon.

Anti-Fighter: Some weapons can be set to defend against attacks by fighters. When this is the case there will be a circle in the bottom right portion of the weapon data block indicating what the rating of the weapon is while firing in this mode. Details on this are given in the *Fighters* section of these rules.

Range: This is the range band for the weapon system. There are four range bands: short, medium, long and extreme.

Fire Control: This indicates the fire control die the weapon system uses. There are three numbers separated by slashes. The first number is used when firing against capital and heavy combat ships. The second number is used when firing against medium ships. The final number is used when firing at fighters.

Damage: This is the damage the weapon does. Normally this is indicated as a die type. Sometimes it will simply be a number. When this is the case the weapon automatically causes damage if it hits (matter weapons are the most common type of weapon to do this).

Max Shots/Turn: This stat indicates how often a particular weapon system can fire during a turn. If a weapon cannot fire 3 times a turn there must be a one pulse delay between attacks with the weapon system. This delay extends between turn.

Ship Structural Data

On the ship datacard there will be a *structural data* block. This block is used to track any damge the ship has taken. As was indicated earlier, all damage is marked from the right to the left, with the number at the top of the column indicating the current rating of that system.

Combat Procedures
Squadrons will generally operate together at all times during the game. This includes when firing at a targets. Fire is done by squadron, not by ship, though each ship in the squadron may fire at separate targets.

Target Selection
When declaring fire, all ships in a squadron must target ships within the same enemy squadron. However, each firing ship may target a different enemy ship within that squadron. A single firing ship may target only one enemy ship each pulse of fire. If a ship is out of command, it is free to target any enemy ship it wishes though all normal firing penalties apply.

A ship may fire weapons at any ship in the target squadron. However, each ship that is bypassed (in terms of distance from the firing ship to the target), even if already engaged by another ship, creates a penalty of −1 to all fire. This is due to the heavier EW protection your sensors must penetrate the deeper into a squadron you attempt to go. If two targets are the same distance, either one may be fired on with no penalty. However, firing past these two targets will count as a penalty of -2 (-1 per ship).

Ships may also target fighters in this way. However, only one enemy flight may be targeted each pulse. When dealing with fighters it is better to use anti-fighter fire, as detailed later in this book.

Finally, ships may opt to fire their secondary weapons (any weapon that can fire 3 times a turn) at nearby fighters in the same pulse the ship fires at a target with his primary weapons. However, due to the fact the most of your sensors are dedicated to the fire against the ship, all 'x' factors are halved. Ships may fire at multiple enemy flights in this way with each weapon system targeting a separate flight. If firing only at fighters, one flight will be fired at normally with all remaining flights being fired at as detailed above (i.e., using the 50% penalty). Note, however, that a single weapon system may only be fired once during any single pulse.

Firing Procedure – Determining the 'X' Factor
Once you've delcared all of your targets for the squadron, you must determine what 'x' factor is applied against each target for each weapon system. To do this, look at the hex diagram in the weapon data block and compare it to the location of the target. The arc containing the target will be designated as having a certain 'x' factor (such as 'x2'). The illustration shows a detailed example of how to do this.

Firing Procedure – Rolling To Hit

Once you have determined what weapons will be firing at a target and what their 'x' factors are, you must roll to hit. To do so, grab one die for each 'x' equal to the appropriate *fire control rating* for the weapon. Continuing with the illustration from above, we have determined that they have a total 'x' factor of 4 for the Bin'Tak's heavy lasers. Heavy lasers have a *fire control rating* of 1d10 against heavy combat vessels (the first number in the FC stat line). This means that the player will need to roll four 10-sided dice.

When rolling, add each fire control die to the firing vessel's sensor rating. Each total that meets or exceeds the *Def Rating* of the target hits and will potentially damage it. The range of the target can increase the relative *Def Rating* of the target ship. This modification is indicated on the table shown here.

Note that all weapons fire is rolled and the results are recorded before moving on the resolving the damage. Thus, you may not fire one weapon system, find out how the enemy applies the damage, then fire the next. You must declare and resolve all fire first.

Determining Damage

Once you've hit your target, you must determine if any damage is caused. All weapons follow the same general procedure for causing damage. A few types of weapons may modify these rules somewhat. If this is the case, they will each be described separately.

All weapons have a *Damage* rating. This is an indicator of the kind of damage the weapon can cause. Normally, this rating is indicated as one or more dice. To find out what (if any) damage is caused, roll the appropriate dice for each successful hit. Each die that comes up equal to or greater than the appropriate armor rating has caused damage. It is also important to note how much the damage die exceeds the target's armor rating. The higher the result is above the target's armor, the more severe damage the damage will be.

Determining What Is Damaged

As noted above, the amount the damage die exceeds the armor rating of the target, the more severe the damage is. There are three levels of damage that are possible: *minor hits*, *moderate hits* and *severe hits*. The effects of each are described below:

Minor Hits: Minor hits only cause one point of structural damage. Thus, three minor hits would cause three points of damage. Minor hits occur if the damage roll is equal to or one greater than the target's armor.

Moderate Hits: Moderate hits can cause two types of damage. If the damage die is even, it has damaged a primary system (see below on how to determine which system). If the damage die is odd, it has damaged a minor system and one point of structure. Roll a die again (any die, it doesn't matter). If this second die is even, a minor weapon system has been damaged. If it is odd, the maneuvering system has been damaged. Moderate hits occur when the damage roll is 2 or 3 higher than the target's armor.

Severe Hits: Severe hits also come in two varieties. If the damage die is even, it has caused both a point of structural damage and two minor systems hits. Use the procedure noted above to determine what minor systems have been hit. If the damage die is odd, a primary system and two points of structure have been damaged. Roll a second die (it does not matter what type). If the second die comes up even, a primary weapon has been hit. If it comes up odd, the sensor system has been hit. Severe hits occur when the damage roll is 4 or greater than the target's armor.

Below is a basic description of each system type and how to mark damage on them.

Structural Damage: Structural damage represents damage that weakens the actual physical construction that makes up the ship. With enough damage, the ship can potentially fall apart around the crew. When a ship's structure takes damage it should be marked from the right to the left. The number above indicates the number of structure points the ship has remaining. If a grey box is marked as damage, it will affect the morale of the squadron. Rules on this are given later in this book.

Secondary Weapons Damage: Secondary weapons are any weapon system that can fire 3 times a turn. Examples of secondary weapons include twin arrays and standard particle beams. When marking the damage, mark it from the right to the left. The number above the last unmarked box represents the maximum 'x' factor the weapon system can use. Thus, if the weapon system were reduced to a 'x3' maximum rating and the ship had arcs that could normally fire at a 'x5' rating, those weapon systems would only be able to fire at a 'x3' rating. Arcs, however, that were only rated at 'x1' would not be affected by the damage. Note that if no additional secondary weapons are in arc, then a primary weapon has been hit instead. If no secondary or primary weapon systems remain in arc, then structure is damaged instead.

Maneuvering System Damage: Damage to the maenuvering system comes in two varieties. If the ship has been hit from the front or aft (as noted on the capital ship armor arc on page 18), the ship's acceleration or deceleration rating has been reduced. If hit from the front, the decel rating has been reduced, while hits from the aft reduce the accel rating. If the ship is hit from the side, its ability to turn will be reduced. One box should be marked off the turn rating row. When two boxes get marked off this row, also mark off one box from the course correction, hard turn and come about ratings. As before, mark damage from the right to the left. The number at the top of the last unmarked row indicates at what speed the ship can perform the maneuver. If the maneuver system that should have been hit is no longer in existence (for example, all the decel boxes have been destroyed), then the turn rating should be damaged.

This indicates that the engine has begun taking hits and is not producing as much thrust as normal. If no boxes of any applicable type remain, mark the damage on structure.

Primary Weapon Damage: Primary weapons are any weapon systems that can fire less than 3 times each turn. Heavy lasers and matter cannons are examples of primary weapon systems. These systems take damage in the same manner as secondary weapon systems. Note that if no primary weapons remain in arc, a secondary weapon is hit. If no secondary weapons exist, the structure is damaged.

Sensor System Damage: Damage to this system will reduce the sensor rating of the ship. As always, mark the damage from right to left. The last unmarked box denotes the ship's current sensor rating. If no sensors systems remain, damage is applied to the structure.

Remember, when choosing a weapon system to damage, that weapon system must be able to fire into the arc the damage came from. If it cannot, it is not eligible for damage.

Sample Damage Resolution

Following is an illustrated example of how damage is resolved after determining what has hit.

This sample assumes the target has been hit with a potential of 10 points of damage. The target vessel has an armor rating of 4 in the arc struck. Below are the maneuvering and structural data blocks before applying the damage. The red blocks indicate damage the target has already taken.

The attacking player has made all of his to-hit rolls against the target. He must now determine what, if any, damage the hits have caused. Four points of the damage use d10's. Two of them use d6's and the remainder use d8's. First he rolls the two d6's. One comes up a 3, the other a 4. The first result causes no damage. The second result causes a minor hit. One point of damage is marked on the structure.

Next he rolls four d8's. These come up 5, 6, 3, and 8. The first result, the five, causes a minor hit. This results in a second point of structure damage. This point will mark off the grey box, which will have an effect on the squadron's overall morale (described later). The six results in a moderate hit. As the damage die is even, a primary system is hit. A second die is rolled which comes up even indicating a primary weapon system has been hit. The third result causes no damage and the final result causes a severe hit. Since the damage die shows an even number, the hit results in both the loss of another structural point (which reduces it to 3 structure left) and two minor systems are destroyed. The attacking player rolls another two dice (in this case d6's, though the type of die does not matter), which results in odd numbers on both. This indicates the maneuvering system has taken two points of damage. The attacker was located to the side of the target so he marks off two boxes in the turn row. Since this is the second time he has taken turn damage, he must also mark off a hard turn, course correct and come about box.

Finally, the attacker rolls four d10's. The results are 3, 3, 9 and 4. The first two results indicate no damage. The third results in another severe hit. Since the die is odd a primary system and two more structure boxes are destroyed. The attacker rolls a second die (again, it does not matter which one) which comes up with an even result. This indicates that a primary weapon is destroyed. As the only primary weapon that this ship has are heavy pulse cannons, the defender must mark one of these as destroyed. This means that the heavy pulse cannons are destroyed. If the ship had several primary weapon systems, the defender would be allowed to choose which weapon system to damage. The final result is a four which results in another minor hit (one point of structure) which destroys the ship. The illustration on the next page shows what the target's structural and maneuvering data blocks look like after all the damage has been applied. The blue blocks are damage applied from minor hits, the green blocks are damage applied from moderate hits, and the purple blocks is damage applied from severe hits (you do not need to use separate colors when marking damage--they are only used here for purposes of illustration). The diagram below shows what the target ship looked like after all this damage had been applied.

Determining Damage – Special Weapon Class Rules

There are a number of differnt types of weapon systems employed throughout the Babylon 5 Universe. These include particle weapons, laser weapons, matter weapons, and other types. Each weapon class has characteristics unique to itself, and most score damage a little differently from one another. Details on each type of weapon system are given below.

Particle Weapons: Particle weapons cause damage exactly as specified previously. This is the most common type of weapon employed in the Babylon 5 Universe.

Laser Weapons: Laser class weapons cause damage in the same manner as particle weapons. However, laser weapons tend to be longer ranged and do more damage than a particle weapon system.

Matter Weapons: Unlike other devices, matter weapons do not have a die type indicated. Instead, all matter weapons will automatically cause the amount of damage indicated by its damage rating. You must, however, still determine where the hit occurs. To do this, roll a d10. If the result is four or less it will damage the structure. If the roll is 5 to 8, the weapon has damaged a minor system. If the roll is even, it will be a secondary weapon. If odd, it will be the maneuvering system. Finally, on a 9 or 10 a severe hit has occured. If even, a primary weapon has been destroyed. If odd, a sensor hit has occured. Should a matter weapon system cause more than one point of damage, both points are applied to the same location. Do no roll separate locations for each point.

Plasma Weapons: Due to the super-heated nature of plasma, this type of weapon easily burns through even the toughest of armors. Because of this, all armor ratings are reduced by two points (minimum of two). However, plasma weapons tend to quickly dissapate as they travel through space, so they will do less damage the further they are from their target. Therefore, the damage rating for plasma weapons will have four ratings. The first is used when fired at short range, the second for medium range, the third for long, and the last for extreme range shots.

Pulse Weapons: Pulse weapons fire a series of short bursts, or *pulses*, at the target. The more accurate the hit, the more pulses will hit the ship. Pulse weapons hit with one extra pulse per point over the necessary to-hit number. Thus, if you were firing at a target, needed a 12 to hit, and rolled a 14, you would hit with 3 pulses. Damage from each pulse is treated separately and applied normally (i.e., the same as a particle weapon). All pulse weapons, unless noted otherwise, have a limit of five pulses that can hit. Note that if a pulse weapon hits exactly it hits with one pulse.

Flash Weapons: Flash weapons explode near the target instead of on it, washing the target in destructive energies. If a flash weapon causes a moderate or severe hit, both possible results will occur (the ones usually determined by the die's odd or even status). Thus, on a severe hit the structure will be damaged, a minor system will be damaged, and a primary system will be damaged. Roll to determine which specific type of system is damaged as indicated in the rules above. Note, however, that only the worst of the structure damage applied, do not add damaged structure from both the even and odd result.

Ballistic Weapons

Ballistic weapons are a special category unto themselves. This category covers weapons that are either fired at a particular point in space (often referred to as *proximity weapons*) or guide themselves to their target with no help from the firing ship. Both types of weapons are relatively slow when compared to normal weapons, but benefit from the advantage of not suffering from range.

When looking at the combat stats for a ballistic weapon, you will note that there is only one number in the range bracket. This is how far the weapon may be fired. There is never a range penalty when firing ballistic weapons. No matter the range, it is always considered short.

With the exception of energy mines and other proximity devices, ballistic weapons are fired normally. However, they do not hit immediately. A ballistic weapon will hit in a number of pulses equal to the range divided by 15 plus one (round up) as explained previously. Thus, a ballistic weapon will always have at least a one pulse delay before it hits its intended target even when at range 0. The results from ballistic weapons are resolved before any movement or fire is completed on the impact pulse.

If a ballistic weapon does not have a secondary weapon class indicated, it is treated as a particle weapon for damage purposes. When determining what arc the damage is applied from (ie forward, side or aft), use the target vessel's best

armor rating. Any weapon system may be damaged that could fire into that arc. Note that while range penalties do not apply, all other appropriate penatlies do apply. In addition, the sensor rating used for is that of the firing ship at the time of firing.

Energy Mines

Energy mines (or *e-mines*) are used by the Narns as a fleet support weapon system. These weapons operate by damaging enemy ships as they approach or by creating "zones of death" that the enemy will veer around, thus allowing the Narns to channel the enemy in a fashion they desire.

When firing energy mines, each squadron designates a single hex as the central targeting area for the squadron. The mines are fired in the energy mine launch phase of the turn and arrive as noted in the ballistic rules. Just like normal ballistic weapons, energy mines have their results figured before any other actions in the pulse (if other ballistic weapons hit at the same time, they resolve damage simultaneously with energy mines).

When a squadron launches its mines, they will all target an area around the central impact point. The more energy mines in a squadron, the larger their effective radius will be. This makes bomber groups especially dangerous, as Narn Dag'Kar Missile Frigates each carry a large number of mine launchers. The chart shown here indicates the impact radius based on the number of mines launched.

Every unit within the affected hexes may be damaged by an e-mine. Roll a single d12 for each unit or flight of fighters and subtract the number indicated on the chart on the next page. If this totals 5 or greater, the unit has been hit and takes 1d12 damage. Fighters will be it a starship or another flight of fighters. The exact way these missions are carried out are detailed hereafter.

Fighter missions are assigned during the pre-turn phase of the turn, at the same time orders are assigned to ship squadrons. However, unlike ships, it takes a bit more effort to coordinate the vast numbers of fighters that may be present in an engagement. For this reason, orders may only be altered on odd-numbered turns, beginning with turn one of the game. This makes planning your fighter operations very important.

Launching and Landing Fighters

A ship may launch its fighters when its squadron moves. The action of launching takes no more effort than announcing the launch. Place newly launched fighters in one of the six hexes surrounding the ship at the end of the ship's movement. The fighters can be assigned any mission when launched. Escort fighters, however, are not considered on station until they have moved to within range of its charge (see below).

To land, a fighter simply needs to end its movement in the hex of a carrier that has space for it and can legally transport the class of fighter. If landing, simply remove the fighters from the board when they enter the hex of the carrier they are landing on. The carrier does not have to be currently active, but must be in the command net.

Fighter Statistics

Fighters have only a few statistics, each of which are explained below.

Move: This is how far a fighter may move during its activation.
Def Rating: This represents the agility of the fighter and the difficulty involved in hitting it.
Off Rating: This represents the targeting ability of the fighter in normal combat. It will be noted as a die type.
Dogfight: When involved in a dogfight, the flight uses this die instead of the Off Rating. This represents a fighter's ability to duke it out against other fighters.
Armor: This is how well the fighter stands up to incoming fire.

Damage: This represents the power of the weapon the fighter uses. This will generally be a die type.

Burn: This indicates how much extra movment a fighter can get when he uses his afterburners.

Fighter Movement

A fighter's movement is dictated by its Move statistic. This stat notes how many movement points the fighter has in one turn. Each hex the fighter enters costs one movement point. Each time a fighter alters its direction of travel, it costs one point of its movement per hexside altered. The final facing of the fighter is not important for combat purposes, as a fighter is agile enough to be able to spin to face any direction. The exact speed of a fighter flight does not need to be tracked due to how quickly a fighter can alter its speed. A fighter is not required to move the full distance its Move stat allows. Fighters may turn as many hex sides as they desire so long as they can pay the extra point of movement for each hex side. Note that fighters cannot slip.

Engaging the Afterburners (Optional)

Once per turn fighters may activate their afterburners. This will give the fighter a short burst of acceleration, enabling it to move further than it normally could during the pulse. The *Burn* rating indicates how many extra hexes (not movement points) the fighter may move when doing this. The fighter is not required to use all of these points. Using the afterburners does not restrict the fighter's combat abilities except as described hereafter.

Afterburners use a good deal of fuel and are generally held for times when that burst of speed is absolutely necessary. The mission the fighter is currently operating under indicates the requirements the fighter flight must adhere to when engaging their afterburners.

Superiority: Fighters operating in a superiority role may only engage their afterburners if they will intercept an enemy fighter by doing so. If no enemy fighters are within range to intercept, then the afterburners may not be activated. This means that afterburners may not be used simply as a way to move a few extra hexes.

hence, the escort's charge). If the escort's charge moves into the same hex as an enemy fighter, the escort fighter may only engage the enemy fighter if the enemy forces a dogfight. In that case, the escort fighter will do the dogfighting while the charge continues on.

If an escort flight is engaged in the dogfight for more than one turn, it must move back towards its charge as quickly as possible when the dogfight is complete (assuming it survives). The escorts must be moved normally towards their charge. They may not move to engage enemy units while en route to their charge, but can avoid them if necessary. To gain all the benefits of being on escort, they must begin the pulse within a legal escort position (i.e., within four hexes of a command ship or the same hex as a fighter). Optionally, the escort fighter can revert to a superiority mission immediately, with the hex it currently occupies as its assigned patrol zone.

Escort fighters may also respond to incoming ships. If a ship ends its move within intercept range of the escort fighter and the escort fighter is escorting a ship squadron, then they may, if the controlling player wishes, move to engage the ship. If so opted, move the escort fighters into the same hex as the target. Escort flights gain no bonus when attacking an enemy ship and can only attack one ship in a single turn. They will also have to suffer from anti-fighter fire normally.

Fighter Combat

Fighter combat is conducted in the same basic way as normal combat. All fighter weapons, unless otherwise specified, have a Range rating of 0 hexes. (Some fighters may have two or more weapon systems. When this is the case, the fighter may only fire one of the weapon systems each pulse unless noted otherwise in the fighter's description.) When making your attacks, each flight gets one attack. The more fighters in the flight, the more likely the flight is to score

damage. Make a normal attack roll using the fighter's offensive rating. For each two fighters alive in the flight add one to the roll. Thus, if there are five fighters, you would add two to the attack roll. If the attack hits, roll damage normally, but add one to the damage roll for each two fighters alive in the flight. Use the normal procedure outlined earlier in these rules to determine exactly what has been damaged.

Unlike normal ships, fighters do not have structure points. Instead, if a shot penetrates the armor of a fighter, the fighter is assumed to be destroyed or forced out of action. There may be exceptions to this for very large fighters, as listed in their individual descriptions.

Anti-Fighter Fire

Some weapon systems can operate in an *anti-fighter mode*. Weapons in this mode automatically fire at any fighter flight that moves into the same hex as the ship, so long as that flight is either attacking the ship or escorting an attacking flight. Anti-fighter fire enjoys the benefit of attacking the fighters before the fighters may attack back.

Each weapon system on a ship will have its anti-fighter rating indicated in a circle in the bottom right of the weapon data block. If there is no circle here, then the weapon system may not fire in anti-fighter mode.

A weapon system may fire in anti-fighter mode if it has not yet fired in standard (offensive) mode during the turn, or at least one full pulse has been played since the last time the weapon system fired in standard mode. A single weapon system cannot fire in both standard and anti-fighter modes in the same pulse.

When firing in AF mode, a weapon system may only fire at fighters or shuttles in its hex. However, weapons in this mode may fire in every pulse of the turn regardless of their normal fire rate. This is due to the lower power consumption rate this mode requires.

Weapons in AF mode can potentially devastate a single flight of fighter that attack. However, properly orchastrated attacks by fighters can quickly overwhelm a ship's fighter defenses. To determine the actual 'x' rating of any anti-fighter fire, divide the weapon system's AF 'x' rating by half the number of fighter flights that are in the ship's hex during the current pulse(round up). Note that these fighters do not all actually have to be attacking the ship (though you do not count allied fighters in this calculation). This is the 'x' rating fired at each and every enemy flight in the hex. Note that if this calculation results in a rating less than one, only half the fighter flights that are attacking will have to endure AF fire. The exact flights are left to the player controlling the firing unit. In this case, the 'x' rating against these flights will be 'x1' for that weapon system. The player who is doing the AF fire chooses what flights get attacked.

If a flight targeted by AF fire has escort fighters with it, those escort fighters can be used to absorb the fire. Roll to hit the true targeted flight normally. However, use the escort flight's armor to determine what actual damage is caused. If all the escort fighters are destroyed, any remaining damage will hit the original target flight. Note that the escort flight must first survive any AF fire directed at it first.

Anti-fighter weapons can be switched to long range mode. This can be done in any pulse and affects all weapon systems on the ship. It cannot be done in the same pulse that standard AF fire is used.   While in this mode, ships can fire at enemy flights in the six hexes around it (1 hex radius). However, unlike normal AF mode which can fire no matter where the fighter is, long range fire is limited by the arcs of the ship. Compute the actual AF fire normally, but use half of the 'x' rating for the weapon system in the appropriate arc as your base AF rating. Note that it is possible for some ships to be more effective in certain arcs in this mode. You should note that ships in long range mode can only fire into one hex per weapon system.

Dogfights

When two enemy flights of fighters enter the same hex, they begin a dogfight. Dogfights are whirling melees of twisting,

turning and dodging fighters and are extremely deadly to the participants. Dogfights are not optional. If a flight ignores an enemy flight in their hex it is assumed that the foolish pilots are destroyed along with their fighters (assuming the enemy flight attacks).

All dogfight attacks occur at the end of each pulse after all fire. Both sides make attacks against one another simultaneously. Unlike normal combat, however, there is no to-hit roll. In these fast-paced, short-ranged battles, the participants will exchange several shots with one another during the course of a pulse. When determining kills, make one standard damage roll for the flight as indicated previously in these rules but add one per fighter in the flight, not one per two fighters as stated previously. Add into this any normal bonuses or penalties from fighter special abilities (such as Interceptor). Compare this to the table shown here to determine how many enemy fighters have been killed. This table bases to total roll against the target's dogfight rating.

At the end of the turn, if both sides still have fighters, roll to see where the dogfight drifts. First, roll a d6 for direction then a d4 for distance. If the dogfight moves through other fighter flights, they may become involved. If the player who controls the flight wishes it to become involved, it does so automatically. If the enemy has more fighters already in the dogfight, then the new flight will get involved automatically if they are in superiority mode. If not in superiority mode, the flight will be forced to participate if the enemy states he is doing so. In the case of fighters with escorts, the escorts will get involved instead of the escort's charge regardless of the number of enemy flights.

It is possible for more than two flights to be involved in a dogfight. When this occurs, each side should roll for each of his flights and figure out the total number of kills. The other player then allocates these hits amongst his involved flights as he sees fit. If one side has more than one type of fighter in the dogfight (or if there are multiple sides participating), the attacking player must divide his fighters among the various types (and/or sides), then make his dogfight rolls. He can divide them in any manner he wishes and may opt not to attack one type of fighter (or side) at all. Note that if there are escort flights in the dogfight, the player who controls the escorts may apply damage to them instead of their charge until the escort is destroyed. If the escort's charge is not in the dogfight, the escorts do not have this ability.

Once a dogfight begins, it continues until either all sides call it off (which they can do by mutual agreement) or only one side or the other remains. At that time, the surviving fighters continue on their normal mission. They may be facing any direction the controlling player wishes at that point.

Fighter Special Abilities

Some fighters have been designed with special duties in mind. For example, the Centauri Republic's Sentri fighter has been optimized as an interceptor. The Narn Regime's Frazi is built with an anti-ship role in mind. To represent this, such fighters have special abilities that grant them bonuses in certain situations. Each of these are described below. Note that all modifiers are cumulative.

Anti-Ship
Some fighters have been designed specifically to engage enemy warships. This is both a boon and a problem. While they excel when attacking enemy ships, they generally suffer when they do battle against enemy fighters. Each level of the anti-ship ability grants the flight a +1 on its to-hit and damage roll against a ship of medium size or larger. However, if the flight enters into a dogfight, it will suffer a -1 to its dogfight roll (no matter the level of the ability).

Interceptor
Fighters with this ability have been designed specifically to engage enemy fighters. They excel in the high-speed twisty battles that take place between fighters. Each level of this ability grants the flight a +1 to their dogfight roll.

Stealth
Fighters with this ability have been designed with the desire to go unnoticed until they reach their target. Fighters with the stealth ability may only be attacked at a range of 0. Thus, they are immune to standard fire and to long-range anti-fighter fire.

MORALE

In the large battles *Fleet Action* portrays, the morale of the various ship Captains and Squadron Commanders can play an important role. When the option of fleeing to fight another day or staying and dying has presented itself, most Captains and Commanders will choose the former. In fact, unless the battle is around an extremely important strategic location, most battles are not fought to the death. Instead, one side or the other will capitulate and signal their retreat before being completely wiped out.

An important factor that plays into morale is the situation. If the battle is only a skirmish in which neither side stands to lose anything of strategic import, ships are more likely to flee. If, on the other hand, one side is protecting a valuable shipyard or colony, they are much more likely to stick it out.

Tracking the Morale of a Squadron

As the battle progresses, a squadron will likely begin to recieve damage. The more damage a squadron recieves, the more likely their commander is to order the squadron to retreat. On each structure track there will be one or more greyed-out boxes. After designing the squadron, total the number of grey boxes and note this in the squadron *morale starting level circle.* In the series of vertical circles to the right, the player should indicate what half of this value (round down) is in the top circle. In each circle below this, subtract 10% (round down) from the squadron's starting value (or one, whichever is greater) and indicate it here. Any excess circles at the bottom of the sheet should be marked out. This sets up your squadron morale record on the squadron control sheet. The illustration here shows an example of a morale box completely filled out.

Each time a greyed-out structure box is marked off, this should be noted on the morale damage track. Once enough damage has been caused to reduce the morale of the squadron to the level indicated by the top morale level circle (the vertical circles on the right), the player must make a morale roll. To do this, roll a d12. If the die shows the number indicated or greater, the squadron will begin withdrawal operations. Note that a squadron only rolls once per morale level. Thus, it would roll once needing an 11 or 12 to retreat, once needing a 9-12, and so on.

Situation Modifiers

As noted earlier, the particulars of the battle will have a definite effect on how likely a squadron is to stick around for the battle. The table shown on the next page indicates the modifiers that should be used when making a morale check. The turn prior to any scheduled arrival, roll a single d6 after all other actions are completed. On a 3 or less, the fleet arrives on schedule. On a 4 or greater, there has been a delay. If they are delayed, roll again the end of the next turn. This time they arrive on a 4 or less. The next turn and from then on it will be on a 5 or less.

If, on the first turn, you roll a 6, roll again. If another 6 is rolled, then something has happened and the reinforcements do not arrive at all! Do not make this check every turn, only on the first turn's arrival check.

If the roll indicates successful arrival, you must announce this fact, and either place jump markers or indicate the appropriate board edge. Once the forces actually arrive on the map (on the following turn), the fleet is integrated into the normal command structure. However, as they have their own flagship, the loss of the fleet flag will not affect them. For this reason it is important to keep track of which squadrons are part of the reinforcing fleet.

ELINT ABILITIES

ELINT (Electronic Intelligence) vessels are a great asset to a fleet. On a strategic scale, they are used as scouts, slipping quietly into an enemy system and listening to any electronic signals that may be generated by enemy activity. Proper analysis of these signals can give a fleet admiral critical information of an enemy's disposition in a target zone. On a tactical scale, ELINT vessels can assist in the targeting abilities of allied warships. ELINT vessels are,

however, expensive to operate and maintain, and are a limited asset for any fleet commander.

Within *Fleet Action,* only the tactical uses of the ELINT vessel come into play. All ELINT vessels will have an *ELINT level* indicated on their datacard. Each level indicates that the vessel can use one of the below listed ELINT abilities. Note that some abilities actually require multiple ELINT levels. When this is the case it is possible to utilize several ELINT ships whose levels are less individually but combine to meet the level requirements. Thus, if a player wished to use an ability that normally required two ELINT levels he could combine two level 1 ELINT vessels to get the job done.

Each ability below requires one level of ELINT ability unless noted otherwise. A ship with multiple levels of ELINT ability may use multiple actions each turn. Note that abilities that support the ELINT vessel's squadron may only be used when the squadron is in command.

Lend Offensive Support

This squadron level action allows the ELINT ship to improve the sensor rating of all ships in the squadron by one point. This cannot be used if the squadron is out of command. This bonus will only apply if the targeted enemy squadron is within 20 hexes of the squadron gaining this bonus at the time of firing. Measure this range from squadron commander to squadron commander. This range is measured at the time fire begins. Anti-fighter fire does not benefit from offensive support.

Lend Defensive Support

This squadron level action increases the defense rating of the squadron by one point. This ability may not be jammed in any way. This does not defend against attacks from enemy fighters.

Jam Enemy Command Network

This ability may be used to force a ship out of its command network. If done on a standard ship, then that ship suffers the penalty of being out of command for the turn. If done on a squadron commander, the entire squadron will be out of command. If done to a flagship, then entire fleet will be out of command. However, to use this against a command ship, two levels of ELINT are required, and to use it against a flagship, four levels are required. In addition, the ship or ships performing this ability must be within 15 hexes of the ship(s) they are targeting at all times. If, at any point, the range is increased over 15, the ability is lost for the remainder of the turn. In addition, this ability lights up the ELINT vessel on enemy sensors. While it does not provide bonuses to hit it, it does make it easy to target even when the ELINT vessel is behind a screen of allied ships. Enemies may target an ELINT vessel using this ability without the normal penalty for bypasssing closer targets (see the rules on *Target Selection* on page 24).

Jam Enemy ELINT

This ship can jam the effects of one enemy ELINT vessel. Each level of jamming will counteract one level of ELINT ability. Thus, if a ship were using two levels of offensive support and an enemy were to jam him with one level of jamming, one level of offensive support would still be good. If a jammed vessel has his levels reduced below a required amount for an ability he is attempting, the attempt will fail and the extra levels the vessel is using on the ability will be lost. These levels cannot be reallocated. Defensive support cannot be jammed. This ability is limited to a range of 35 hexes.

Jam Fire Control Computers

This ability works to jam a ship's fire control computers. The effect of this is to increase the range bracket that the weapon if firing in. Thus, if firing at medium range, a jammed ship would treat this fire as long range. The jamming ship must be within 25 hexes of the target ship. Each level of this ability can jam the fire control systems of two separate targets.

Damage to the ELINT Systems

As a ship is damaged, its ELINT capabilities may be diminished. On ships with ELINT abilities, there will be one or more boxes along the sensor track with a 'S' in it. Each time one of these boxes is marked as damaged, the ship will lose one level of its ELINT abilitiy.