

# STAR FLEET BATTLES

# SUPPLEMENT #3

## FAST PATROL SHIPS



**TASK  
FORCE  
GAMES**

3019

# STAR FLEET BATTLES SUPPLEMENT #3: FAST PATROL SHIPS

## (Z13.0) NOTES ON SUPPLEMENT #3

### (Z13.1) NOTICE TO CONSUMERS

This is Supplement #3 of the Star Fleet Battles game system. You MUST have Volume I of the Commander's Edition of Star Fleet Battles to utilize the materials in this product. Volume II and Volume III, as well as Supplement #1, will be needed to utilize some of the more advanced functions and the equipment of some races (e.g. Hydran, Lyran).

- A complete copy of Supplement #3 includes:
  - 216 die-cut playing pieces (two sheets of 108)
  - a 32-page Commander's SSD Booklet
  - a 16-page rules folder (this item)
  - a color cover sheet

The rules section on Fast Patrol Ships (sections K0, K1, and K2, including pages 29 and 30 of Volume II) is completely replaced by new pages in this product. If you have Volume II integrated with Volume I and other products in a ring binder, you may want to remove page 29/30 and file it with other removed pages.

### (Z13.2) INTRODUCTION

This supplement provides a complete history of the development of attrition units during the second half of the General War. The earliest attrition units, fighters, were developed in Supplement #1, as well as the three volumes of the Commander's Edition.

The most important attrition unit, the fast patrol ship, was originally introduced in Expansion #2 of the older Designer's Edition a year before the Commander's Edition appeared. This Supplement introduces the PF Leader (a slightly larger PF with extra systems) and the Interceptor (the prototype of the PF). Several variant PFs and one entirely new design (the modular Romulan StarHawk) are also introduced in this product.

Both Interceptors and PFs were designed as attrition units: small fighting units that could be quickly produced in small shipyards. Their primary advantage over fighters was range and their ability to repair themselves (albeit to a limited extent) and to reload their energy-based weapons. Interceptors showed that the concept was valid, but that a larger hull was necessary. The PF is, simply, the largest hull that can operate on the unstable "hot warp" engines first developed by the Lyrans.

### (Z13.3) DESIGNER'S NOTES ON SUPPLEMENT #3

The idea for a PF supplement actually began before the Commander's Edition. We had planned to do two products, one on fighters and the other on PFs, as further expansions of the Designer's Edition. Before design work could begin on either supplement, however, David Crump (Task Force's marketing director) had convinced both Task Force and Amarillo Design of the need for the Commander's Edition. In preparing Volume II, it was decided to hold the X-ship material for a supplement; this became Supplement #2.

Supplement #3 has thus been an active file for new ideas for more than three years. Many of these ideas (Fi-cons, scouts, some variants) were published in other products, but some were held for this project. In designing it, several decisions were made which deserve comment.

### INTERCEPTOR SHIELDS

The concept of two 180° shields on an interceptor solved several game problems. Interceptor shields obviously had to be weaker than PF shields, but those shields were already barely able to stop a single drone or heavy weapon. The original 6-box shields would have been little better than nothing. We considered a unitary shield (such as that used by fighters), but Ray Olesen pointed out the need to have some shielding left to protect the ship in a retreat.

### PF LEADERS

Most playtesters were happy with the new PF leaders, but a few were disappointed. This seems to have been based on comments in an early product that a frigate could be used as a "leader" for a group of PFs. Remembering that, a few people expected the long-awaited PF leaders to be the size of frigates (while retaining a 1/5 movement cost).

The problem is that the PF engines provide a very definite limit on how big something can be and still act like a PF. Under no circumstances can more weapons or engines be added, as these are already at their limits. Leaders were intended to provide certain special functions (shuttle, transporter, tractor). There is no reason why a frigate cannot continue to support a PF flotilla, but the PF leaders were not intended to be frigates.

### FEDERATION PFs, PFTs, AND INTERCEPTORS

The Federation never built PFs or Interceptors. The decision seems to have been a philosophical one, and not everyone in Star Fleet agreed with it. But the records do not show a mere lack of data on Federation PFs (hinting that the file on such vessels may yet be found and translated), but contain repeated clear statements that no such ships were even designed.

For this reason, the PF, NPFT, and Interceptor are labeled as "conjectural," which is defined by Webster as "in the nature of guesswork." No such ships existed, but if they had, the designer and committee are convinced that they would look very much like the designs published here.

The Thunderbolt-class PF and the Mustang-class Interceptor are the most controversial item ever published. The Committee was clearly not comfortable with such units. Even so, there were three reasons for printing a Federation PF. The first was because of widespread demand for one, and the refusal of many players to accept its absence. To date, there have been at least 300 proposals received from players. (We quit counting after 200 in mid-1984.) All were discarded or returned "because the Federation never built PFs."

The second reason was to allow the Federation players something they could use in generic scenarios and mini-campaigns that call for each player to use a "PF Flotilla from his race."

The third reason, and the one that finally secured Committee approval, was the discovery that many campaigns already included locally-designed Federation PFs, presumably because the Federation player talked his opponents into it. Publishing the Thunderbolt-class in this product will, at least, allow those campaigns already using Federation PFs to use the "official" one.

The use of this "conjectural" unit is left up to the players. If the members of a campaign decide to allow its use, so be it. If not, that is their business. The designer and publisher take no position on whether such a unit should or should not be used. Certainly, no campaign should be started over simply because of the publication of the Thunderbolt. If your campaign has a Federation PF, you can keep it or magically change all existing ships to the official type. If your campaign does not include a Federation PF, you can decide whether or not to allow the Federation to start building them (and at what cost).

Two aspects of this most controversial unit were, in themselves, the subject of extreme controversy. The first of these is the gatling phaser. Many players assumed that since the Federation had that equipment, it would use it on a PF. Closer analysis shows, however, that the ship-mounted gatling is in VERY limited Federation service (only on carriers and their escorts). Under no circumstances should that weapon be installed on a Federation PF, or indeed on any PF except a Hydran (or possibly Orion).

The second aspect is the range of the photon torpedo. As Federation PFs were never built, there is some dispute as to whether the photons on such a craft can fire 30 hexes. The more conservative approach is to limit the range of torpedoes on Federation PFs, fighters, and interceptors to 12 hexes. This is left up to each campaign. (The range of the A-20's torpedoes should be changed only if the PF is adopted.)

A more radical approach is to assume that all photon torpedoes are created equal, and that all can fire 300,000 kilometers. There is some merit to this, as the photons on all ships, from police cutters to dreadnoughts, have that range. The decision is up to the campaign.

In the end, the Federation PF was published because some players wanted one, and our responsibility is to provide a "correct" unit for use. Those who wish to ignore it may continue to do so.

### TYPE-D PLASMA TORPEDOES, PLASMA BOLTS

The final stages of the design of Supplement #3 took place concurrently (Fall 1985) with the "Plasma Prosecution," a full-scale committee review of the plasma torpedo. One result of this review is the canister-loaded type-D plasma torpedo, which is primarily intended for use by fighters. Rules for this weapon are in playtest, but have not been finalized. There is some possibility that special "plasma racks" may be published.

Another result of the review is the "plasma bolt," a mechanism for firing a plasma torpedo as a burst of energy (i.e. direct-fire).

Publication of these rules is expected in Nexus #14. For this reason, tables for the plasma-D and plasma bolt are included on Romulan, Gorn, and ISC units in this product. Until formal publication of these rules, it is strongly recommended that you ignore these tables. Type-D plasma torpedoes cannot (at least currently) be fired from type-F launchers, and plasma bolts have a considerably reduced warhead strength and other limitations.

Rest assured, however, that when those rules are published this product will not become obsolete.

## THE FUTURE OF FAST PATROL SHIPS

In the process of designing this product, several ideas were compiled which could not be included either due to a lack of space to print them or a lack of time to develop them. These ideas, which are on file for possible future use, include cargo packs, long-range support packs, WYN and Andromedan "conjectural" PFs, and much more. This product was never intended to be the last word on PFs. Their future is as bright as the Star Fleet Universe itself.

*Stephen V Cole, Professional Engineer, Designer of SFB*

### (Z13.4) A WORD ON PF TACTICS

Most PF tactics are well-known. Keep your formation close enough together to concentrate your firepower and far enough apart so that one explosion doesn't destroy the entire force. Think carefully before dropping the dangerous booster packs. Think of the entire flotilla as a single entity. Losing a PF reduces the flotilla's firepower by 20%, but doesn't destroy it.

PF scouts are the most important and most vulnerable unit in the flotilla. Their electronic warfare support is crucial, but most can barely defend themselves. The scout must be deployed far enough forward to do its job and far enough to the rear to remain safe. Scouts are not something to be exposed to attack or used as a wild-PF except in the most decisive engagements.

Leaders are less important, but should not be risked without good reason. —*Frank Crull*

### (Z13.5) DESIGN CREDITS

Original Game System Design . . . . . Stephen V Cole, PE  
Supplement #3 Designer . . . . . Stephen V Cole, PE  
Interceptor Design . . . . . S J Cutforth, Staffordshire, UK  
Supplement #3 Developers . . . . . Ray D Olesen, Felix Hack,  
Jeff Smith, Frank Crull  
Assistant Developers . . . . . Darwin Boyle, Alan Gopin,  
Tom Hammond  
Graphics (SSD's) . . . . . Leanna M Cole, MacPaint  
Graphics (Counters) . . . . . Vance Buck  
Cover Painting . . . . . Bill Keith  
Production . . . . . Allen D Eldridge  
Marketing . . . . . David W Crump  
Typesetting . . . . . Brad Van Camp  
Consultant . . . . . Franz Joseph  
Chief of ADB Security . . . . . Blackie

### (Z13.6) PLAYTESTERS FOR SUPPLEMENT #3

Group #114S (Tucson, AZ): Leonard Byrd III, Henry E Tyler, Bart Smith, Will Gilbert, Scott Levin.

Group #134M (Coast Guard Academy): Stephen Jackson, Steve Truhlar, Rob Schmidt, Bob Klapproth.

Group #209G (Milwaukie, OR): Stuart Craig, Doug Junker, Dwight Charf, Gordon Nance, Phil Baird, Paul Nance, Joe Mihara.

Group #212A (Houston, TX): Frank Crull, Jack Chappellear, Henry Triplett, Eric Nussberger, Bob McClure, John Viles, James Martin, Sydney Polk, James Spring, Evan Barber, Billy Brown, Troy Roper.

Group #233B (Rockford, IL): Brian Collins, Kelly Cook, Greg Johnson, Russell McKinney, Doug Nelson, Eric Carra.

Group #235B (Auburn, AL): Ed Gillis, Ed Daniels, Steven Gillis, Alan Gibbs.

Group #245M (US Army, Germany): Mark Cockerel, Bill Heim.

Group #251G (Hopkins, MN): David M Porter, Brett Schaff, Keither Dauenbaugh, Robert A Hahn, Jim Studer, Dave Berg.

Group #255B (Oklahoma City, OK): Bruce Burdick, Larry Lucas, Robert Rycroft, Brian Wallenberg, Rick Peterson, John Hawkins, Joel Meyers.

Group #257B (London, Ontario): Scott Mayne, Craig Hodgins.

Group #269G (Denver, CO): Darwin Boyle, Drew Spaulding, Paul Stukenholtz, Ken Bishop, Brad Brenton, James Muir, Todd Dalton, Jeff Roker, Matt Heib, James Wood, Dave Edgar, Mike West.

Group #279B (St Louis, MO): Richard Beyer, Gary Rucker, Joe Frick, Hugh Niewoehner, Pat McKee, Greg Grady, Paul Hammerman, Paul Morgan.

Group #280B (Chicamauga, GA): J Anthony Clem.

Group #288B (New Port Richie, FL): Scott Hedrick, Meredith McNeil.

Group #295B (Carnegie, PA): Walt Mizia, Tom Morris.

Group #297B (North Huntingdon, PA): Matt Novosedliak, Mike Novosedliak.

Group #303B (Bellevue, WA): Bob Thein, Pat Thein.

## (Z13.7) COPYRIGHT AND PUBLISHER'S INFORMATION

*STAR FLEET BATTLES SUPPLEMENT #3* was created by Amarillo Design Bureau and published by Task Force Games.

Task Force welcomes dealer inquiries. Task Force products are available to individuals in retail stores and from several direct mail companies. Products are not directly available to stores or individuals from Task Force Games; please do not order from TFG.

If you have reason to contact TFG, write to: Task Force Games, 1110 North Fillmore, Amarillo, Texas 79107

Questions, comments, suggestions, new ships or scenarios, fiction, and other expansion material for the *STAR FLEET UNIVERSE*, including the Star Fleet section of *NEXUS* magazine, should be sent only to: Amarillo Design Bureau, Post Office Box 8759, Amarillo, Texas 79114

All future expansions and other products for the *STAR FLEET UNIVERSE* will be prepared by ADB; all questions relating to existing products will be answered by ADB. All correspondence must include a stamped self-addressed envelope if you wish to receive an answer. (Foreign customers should enclose two or more International Reply Coupons.) It is imperative that you place your name and address on every page of your submission. Do not put questions and expansion material on the same sheet; put each rule, scenario, or ship on a separate sheet. When sending questions phrase each one so that it can be answered with a yes or no, a brief answer, or by circling one of several choices. Leave a blank line between questions. Your return envelope MUST bear enough postage to cover the return of your questions (about four pages to one first-class stamp).

All submissions are accepted ONLY under the following terms unless specifically agreed otherwise in writing by ADB: All materials submitted immediately become the property of Amarillo Design Bureau and may be used, modified, expanded, or changed as we, in our sole judgment, see fit. All materials used will be credited to the original author to the extent of his original submission. Authors submitting material used in *NEXUS* magazine or fiction for *CAPTAIN'S LOG* will be paid at standard rates. Authors submitting material used in a future product will receive a copy of that product or other appropriate compensation determined by ADB. Authors submitting such material must include a stamped reply envelope; you will be sent a brief evaluation of your material and will be notified if it is published in a future product. Submission of any material is considered to be acceptance of these terms, which are legally binding on all submissions not specifically exempted.

*STAR FLEET BATTLES SUPPLEMENT #3: FAST PATROL SHIPS* and all contents hereof is copyright © 1985 by Amarillo Design Bureau. All rights are reserved under the Pan-American, Berne, and International Copyright Conventions. This module was produced by special arrangement with Franz Joseph Designs, authors of the *STAR FLEET TECHNICAL MANUAL*.

Printing by Standard Printing Company and Southwest Reproductions of Amarillo, Texas.

# STAR FLEET BATTLES

## SUPPLEMENT #3 – FAST PATROL SHIPS

**FAST PATROL SHIPS** — Meaner than fighters, cheaper than starships, but with a punch no starship can ignore.

*Star Fleet Battles Supplement #3 – Fast Patrol Ships* fully develops fast patrol ship technology. It also portrays the battle history of these ships from their introduction by the Lyrans in Y178 to the end of the General War.

*Star Fleet Battles Supplement #3 – Fast Patrol Ships* includes new rules, new Commander's SSDs, new playing pieces, new ship types (PF leaders and interceptors), six new scenarios and a special PF campaign game. Rule sections K1 and K2 are expanded, and all errata is incorporated in these sections. A new rule section, K3, details the use of interceptors, the precursors of the PFs. This product provides new Commander's SSDs and an energy allocation form for entire PF flotillas, as well as SSDs for the new interceptor class.

Included in *Star Fleet Battles Supplement #3* are:

- ★ **32-page Commander's SSD booklet of PF flotillas, interceptor squadrons and PF tenders**
- ★ **216 die-cut playing pieces of fast patrol ships**
- ★ **16 pages of new rules and scenarios**

**NOTE!** This product adds new play situations and rules for the *STAR FLEET UNIVERSE*. **YOU MUST HAVE STAR FLEET BATTLES VOLUME I** to use any of the material presented. You will need *STAR FLEET BATTLES VOLUME II & III* for some of the ships, technology and scenarios presented. Other *STAR FLEET UNIVERSE* products can be used with this product and will provide greater enjoyment.



MADE IN USA

Designed by STEPHEN V. COLE  
Developed by the AMARILLO DESIGN BUREAU



3019