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Author names are noted at the beginning of each article and can also be found at the back of this book. Where there is an introduction and no author was noted, it can generally be assumed that that paragraph was written by the editor.

Presumably if you're reading this, you're a regular reader of WNOHGB Online (<http://wnohgb.com>) and have been eagerly awaiting the release. Or maybe you never heard of us and received this book as a gift. That's okay, too. Either way, let me tell you what we're trying to do here.

WNOHGB Online began publication in December 1997 and has been coming out more or less monthly since then. In the summer of 1999, we published three print issues in magazine format; while popular, this format was discontinued due to a lack of advertiser support. Since then, we've been wanting to do another print version, and in late 2000 I located a publisher and organized a group of writers.

Our requirements for writers are simple: they had to be able to create well-written articles, and they had to really know the game. Our writers include state champions and world finalists. They come from all over the world, including the United States, Great Britain, Germany, and South Africa. One thing they have in common: they enjoy playing this game, and that comes through in their writing.

Once you've read through the book, you may find yourself thinking, "they should have had an article about.. " Chances are, we agree with you. However, the way that subjects were chosen naturally results in some omissions: writers were encouraged to take only subjects that they know well and can write about at an expert level. If your favorite deck isn't talked about in this book, it's because our current staff doesn't include someone who has played that deck extensively and wants to write about it. However, what you hold in your hands is not the entire book. Updates and corrections will be posted to <http://wnohgb.com/guide/>. If you'd like to suggest a topic for the next edition of this book, correct an error, or simply comment, our email is [guide@wnohgb.com](mailto:guide@wnohgb.com). If you'd like to write a section in the next version, try submitting a few articles for the online magazine to [submissions@wnohgb.com](mailto:submissions@wnohgb.com) so we can see your writing.

Ok, that's enough from me...let's get on with it! The book starts out with a section on sealed deck play, written mostly by the highest-ranked sealed deck player in the world. After that comes the main part of the book, constructed deck play, which starts with an overview of the various affiliations, then goes on to talk about some of the top decks and finishes up by explaining various concepts that go towards building a successful tournament-quality deck. At the end of the book is a section for tournament directors and potential tournament directors, followed by short author biographies and links to online resources.

I've enjoyed preparing this book. I hope you enjoy reading it.

- William Springer
- Where No One Has Gone Before Editor

# **Wesley Crusher's Guide To Sealed Deck Play**

By Helge Blohmer

Welcome to the world of Sealed Deck! This often neglected format of playing Star Trek poses its own challenges to players, so the first step to becoming a good Sealed player is realizing you are not playing a constructed game. While many great constructed cards are still good in Sealed and general truths like “card advantage is the best advantage” still hold true, a sealed player has to think along different strategic lines than a constructed player.

One note: This guide does not cover the Warp Speed format. Warp Speed has its own rules and strategy and is vastly different from "classic" Sealed Deck play. Check the first online update for information on that format.

## Limited Resources

The core skill of Sealed Deck is managing a limited set of resources. You will usually have between 60 and 120 cards to work with though some formats allow you more cards – Anthology sealed formats provide you with around 200 cards if you get a full box and some progressive formats will in later rounds approach 300 cards. Out of these cards, you will find a number that are completely unusable – cards that do not have a legal target (Writ without a Ferengi FCA), are not legally playable for you (AU icon personnel without an AU door or STP) or simply don't match the affiliation you are playing (yes, that Jean-Luc Picard might be a great pull, but without any Federation Treaty, Memory Wipe or significant numbers of Federation crew he will not be of any use in your deck). In play, a lack of resources will mainly mean one thing for you: a critical lack of backups. Often, you will find you have a specific skill you need only once or twice – and you might find yourself not drawing it at all – so you will have to think twice about which resources you can risk in the game and which ones you have to protect at all costs. At the same time, the core concept behind building a sealed deck is to minimize that last category as your best way to achieve a high speed is to have as few non-expendable cards as you can – the less cards you need to worry about, the less a Dilemma can hurt you. Considering there is little card advantage to be gained in Sealed Deck (unless you are lucky enough to pull a Traveler: Transcendence) and close to no free reporting, not having to worry about losing a single personnel in an ill-placed Dilemma means you can attempt a mission protected by a wall Dilemma a turn earlier, often the one turn you need to get it before your opponent does.

## Starting it all

Before I focus on specific Sealed Formats or cards, let's have a look at how, overall, you should be going at a Sealed Deck tournament. First, be there in time. This is even more important than in constructed, your TD will often wait for players that are a few minutes late in constructed, in Sealed they often won't ("so what if they're ten minutes late, they can make their deck in twenty if they are" syndrome). Be there, purchase your cards if you have to do so and sit down at your table. When the signal comes, open your packs and immediately start sorting the cards by type. What works best is throwing personnel / ships on one pile together for each affiliation and all other cards by card type. In an OTSD environment, treat "Treaty" as their own card type. If you want to become a really good player, you'll have to learn to do this sorting face down ! My personal system uses two rows: Top row Federation – Klingon – Romulan – Nonaligned – Facility - Mission. Bottom row Treaty – Event – Interrupt – Objective – Doorway – Dilemma. Don't worry about card rarity, just sort. You want to play with these cards and win a tournament first, you can worry about retrieving your valuable rares later. The common practice to directly go to the fourth card in each pack and look at that first helps you nothing; on the contrary, you lose out: you waste some ten seconds per pack marveling at your rare (or getting annoyed at it) and you unconsciously constrain your thinking to work around your rares. (Personal anecdote: When playing on EuroGenCon '99, I was playing in an OTSD event, first prize a set of Premiere uncut sheets. I went through my packs, sorting as described. AU pack: Event, Dilemma, Dilemma, Fed Ship, Dilemma, Interrupt, Fed Perso... waitasec, what was that ship again? Took me about 15 seconds to realize I had just drawn and sorted a Future Enterprise...)

## Affiliation Issues

Now that you have your cards sorted, first look at which affiliations you can combine. If your format is Starter Deck II based, you have an easy time. All affiliations are compatible, so you will not be in any trouble – except that you still need to be on the lookout for having enough personnel of the right affiliations to attempt your missions (usually not that hard) and to staff your ships. Especially the latter part is crucial – you'll have to rely on drawing those ships of yours instead of downloading and your two Klingon ships won't do you any good if none of your three Klingons is yet in play. Rule of thumb: For any ship, you will want 4-5 people that can provide the necessary affiliation – and 2-3 more for each ship of that affiliation beyond the first. (The same goes for command stars – if you want to use any ships requiring command stars). In OTSD or Deep Space Nine, you're of course not so lucky. If you want to combine any aligned affiliations, you will need a treaty. The Deep Space Nine starters usually provide you with the required treaty if you have any substantial amount of Federation (and you'll probably also get the Klaestron Outpost when you need to use the Federation / Cardassian treaty), so here your choice of affiliation(s) will be largely dictated of what you actually have.

### **The sorting of Deep Space Nine starters**

Decipher has never actually released information about how they were doing their starters. However they made the (from the standpoint of keeping this information confidential) mistake of giving out a Deep Space Nine "complete set" as a prize – which

was not actually a set, but a collation of the results of each of the four print sheets – rare, uncommon, common, starter common – having been hacked up. This resulted in 360 cards, 64 of which were duplicates. I quickly recognized the pattern in this. The 80-card starter sheet is not fully randomized in the starters, but instead it is sorted. Every 5<sup>th</sup> card is a mission and in between are the other cards. Most of the 16 regular common cards removed from the sheet (to make room for the 16 missions) are verb cards, but a few personnel (I think it was two or three) and a ship or two had also been pulled. The cards are arranged in the order Bajoran – Federation – Cardassian – Non-aligned. Cards needed to play the Federation with either of the other two affiliations are placed between the Federation and that respective affiliation. Also, the three Outpost cards are arranged in a way that any consecutive group of 32 cards will contain at least one outpost (80 divided by 3 is 26.7, so this works). By this arrangement, you will always get one of four possible starter arrangements:

Bajoran / Federation with Treaty

Bajoran / Non-aligned

Cardassian / Federation with Treaty and Klaestron Outpost

Cardassian / Non-aligned.

Now you'll ask where the "off-color" cards in your starter come from. Or those cards you can never get on a starter sheet – after all, all 80 commons can be found in a starter. This is simply caused by the fact that there are both cards from the starter common sheet and from the booster common sheet in every starter. The exact figures are 13 uncommons – 2 rares – 32 starter commons – 13 booster commons. This is also the reason you can occasionally get a duplicate common in a DS9 starter – it might be both in the starter sheet part and the booster sheet part. The 32 starter cards also explain why there are sometimes 6 and sometimes 7 starter missions. The statistical average is 6.4 – so 40% of all starters have seven missions.

The most difficult affiliation choice scenario arises when the format is an OTSD. Here, you have several options:

(1) Single affiliation. This particular option rarely works, but in some cases, you might actually get a decent stock of personnel in one affiliation, especially the Federation. The absolute lower limit for a well-playable OTSD deck is 16 personnel, even if you get good skills (anything less than that and you will be forced to add too many only marginally useful Interrupts and Events). If however you are playing Booster Draft, single-affiliation decks are within reach.

(2) Two affiliations with treaty. This is the optimum case. If you get usable personnel in two affiliations and the required two-way treaty, you will usually choose this option. The critical case in this particular option is when you get more than one seemingly viable option in this group (having two or even three treaty cards and a more or less balanced personnel distribution). In this case, you should first look at your ships (the lack of usable ships might preclude one of your possible choices) and, if this does not solve the problem, you will need to build and evaluate the personnel / mission base for each of your choices and then select the best one (see below – now you also know why I say you need to be able to build a deck in 20 minutes, you might sometimes have to build one and a half of them).

(3) Two affiliations without treaty. This option is to be exercised with care – you might get stuck with unplayable cards in hand. Generally, to go for this particular option, you need a substantial number of non-aligned personnel (ideally at least a Vekor and an ENGINEER plus your Suna and two others) and 6 to 8 personnel of each affiliation. Plus, **never ever** try this unless you have two outposts!!! Nothing is worse than losing your card play because your personnel in hand are the wrong color! In this option, you will usually wind up with over 20 personnel (22-24 seems realistic) and you will need an extra ship or two, so you might be better served with a different option if you also have a number of good Interrupts and Events. You should definitely be wary of your treatyless two-affiliation deck if it leaves you with less than 19 personnel!

(4) Three-Way Treaty. This option makes personnel selection the easiest, but you lose the ability to steal missions. While the problem of mission replacements has now been solved (a double-seeded missions does not count as a steal for either player, so you do not risk losing your missions to an opponent's copy of the same card), you still have only six missions available while your opponent likely has twelve. Also, you run the risk of thinning your Dilemmas (see below in the section on Dilemma seeding).

(5) Three affiliations with one two-way treaty. This option very much resembles option 3 in its advantages and disadvantages. It is typically chosen in the situation when you have a “wrong” two-way treaty linking your weakest two affiliations. When building your deck in this scenario make sure you still always have a place to report your personnel (i.e. you do need two outposts) and that your two incompatible groups are about equal size. Also, like in option 3, you do need above-average non-aligned support to retain the flexibility of getting the right skills to the right group.

(6) Three affiliations with multiple two-way treaties. If you have several two-way treaties but your personnel structure is too weak to go for a two-way deck in either constellation, you can attempt to go with one seeded two-way treaty and the other(s) in the draw deck. Unlike scenario 5 (in which you want your strongest affiliation to stand alone), you will here want the strongest affiliation to be the one that matches both treaties as you will be able to then very flexibly add one or the other affiliation to your primary one as the situation needs it. If you have an outpost for the “outcast” affiliation to use (the one that's not in the treaty), you can also use the personnel from that affiliation as redshirts at the mission the outpost is located at, conserving your primary affiliations' resources

(7) Delayed Three-Way Treaty. For the professional player, OTSD offers a seventh option that can often save an otherwise weak deck, namely when your personnel pull is not really good enough to achieve consistent play in the options 3 or 5 but you also do not have the prerequisites for going for #1, 2 or 6. On the other hand, you don't want to incur the penalties of a full three-way treaty.

To play the delayed three-way, you put the three-way treaty card in your draw deck. Start out as in option 3 or 5 and first go after easy missions you can steal. Then, with your personnel base worn a bit thin due to the loss of your occasional redshirt, you can play the treaty from hand and then go after your own missions with the combined resources of all the affiliations you have. While this strategy does not usually provide you a 100% win ratio, it is often good enough to turn a 1-3 result into a 3-1.

## Evaluating the deck core

Now that you have an idea which affiliation options are available to you, you can build your deck core - missions and personnel. First thing, look through your missions. If you seem to have a possibility to go all-space or all-planet, keep it in mind unless you need to fear a Balancing Act (if you have both chances, all-space is usually preferable). Now, take all personnel for the chosen affiliation scenario. Also, take equipment cards that add skills if you have at least three personnel to activate them (e.g. if you have three OFFICER, you can count a Medical Kit). If you use a scenario in which not all of your cards will be compatible at the start of the game, set them apart by compatibility (don't forget to treat non-aligned personnel as being in both stacks). Now, check each mission's requirements against your personnel's skills. You need to figure out "how many times" you can solve the mission. For each skill, you count how many personnel you have possessing the skill. (Make sure the personnel can actually help you in solving the mission – no point in counting holograms towards a planet mission). Multiples of a skill on single personnel do NOT count higher than the multiplier on the mission, so Sarek's Diplomacy x3 would be counted as one Diplomacy for solving Establish Relations but as three Diplomacy for solving Wormhole Negotiations. Then cross-index your have / need for each skill along this table, getting the "solvability index" for this skill (I can't spare you memorizing this one, it's crucial):

Have Skill:	x1	x2	x3	x4	x5	x6	x7
Need x1	1	2	3	3	3	3	3
Need x2	0	1	1½	2	3	3	3
Need x3	0	0	½	1	1½	2	2½
Need x4	0	0	0	½	1	1	1½
Need x5	0	0	0	0	½	1	1

The solvability for any set of requirements is the lowest solvability for any skill required in that set. If the mission has several OR'ed requirements, you then add together the scores for each requirement. Also, if you have incompatible stacks, you calculate the solvability for each stack that can attempt the mission and add those together. Add 1 to the result if the mission can be solved with only an attribute score (like Excavation). If at the end, you wind up with more than 3, count it as 3. One example case (with a hypothetical mission):

### **Biology x2 + MEDICAL OR Honor x3 Federation / Klingon**

You have both Federation and Klingon personnel, but no treaty making them compatible. The relevant skills are for each group:

Federation: 2 Honor, 3 Biology  
 Klingon: 5 Honor, 0 Biology, 1 MEDICAL  
 Non-aligned : 1 Biology, 1 MEDICAL.



You calculate for the Federation: Factor 2 on Biology (4 over 2), Factor 1 on MEDICAL (1 over 1), Factor 0 on Honor (2 against 3), so the solvability for the Feds is 1 (lesser of 2 and 1) + 0 = 1.

The same calculation for the Klingons results in 0 (0 and 2) + 1½ = 1½.

Your overall solvability for the mission is thus 2½ - pretty good.

Now do this for each and every one of your missions, setting them up in stacks according to solvability. When done, for the moment set aside all your missions that have solvability < 1 and, if you have to include a specific mission because of the seeding requirements of your only Outpost, take it as a definite. Now take your best selection. If you have several equal-value solutions try to make it as unbalanced (space / planet) as possible. If you can now make this selection all-space losing no more than 2 points or all-planet losing no more than 1, do so – the number of Dilemmas you can avoid are worth the slightly worsened chances of drawing the mission skills.

If this process now yielded 6 missions, you are in good shape. If not, you'll have to include some of the missions you cannot realistically solve. This is rather easy when there is only one mission remaining to be added. In this case, your choice should be by two factors – (a) how likely is it your opponent can benefit from it, i.e. how easy is it to solve for him and how many points could he possibly gain and (b) how far can you hope to lure good Dilemmas away from the missions you can actually solve? The latter point is interesting if you have a mission that looks like an easy 35, 40 or even more points for you but in reality is not. Just be careful – your opponent might have the skills for it and nab the points himself! Of course a mission with a solvability of ½ is always preferable to one with a solvability of 0, but you knew that without me explicitly stating it.

For the case of more than one mission being unsolvable, you are in big trouble. First, you might reconsider your deck style, choosing a different affiliation strategy. Very few Sealed Decks are bad enough to leave you with 2 or more missions you cannot solve. If this happens nonetheless, you still have an option available as long as you are in playing OTSD – the so far blissfully ignored Reflection Therapy. With two chances to draw it (directly or by drawing Suna), you can get one skill for free. Now in an ideal case, you will be able to find two unsolvable missions that you can actually complete using Reflection Therapy for the same skill (like Establish Relations and Impose Order if the only thing you are missing is Diplomacy). Just make very sure your personnel gaining the skill is not killed in some way or you've been shut out of a third of your missions. And if you're really stuck with an unplayable deck? Three of your missions unsolvable, only one ship you can use and no Reflection Therapy in sight? Quietly call over the TD and ask to be permitted to resign, showing him your deck. If your deck is really that bad, no TD will force you to play it and just get frustrated the whole day unless they have exactly 8 players in which case it would be very bad sportsmanship to not at least play one game, keeping the sanctioning of the event intact. Note that this is a last resort – if you need to use it more than once in twenty Sealed Deck tournaments, you are either the unluckiest person in the world or you are too strict as to what consists a playable (and winnable) deck. I've played 3-1 with decks half of all STCCG players would consider unwinnable. So think again. Also, don't just leave without asking the TD for permission. That's bad sportsmanship. If a TD really asks you to play a horrible deck, they will have a reason – they need their sanctioning maintained, the turnout is so horribly low that half of the

players would need to sit out a round if you leave, etc. You can however expect the TD to at least take a look at your deck (and you should also allow your fellow players to inspect it after your withdrawal so they will understand you didn't just withdraw because your deck wasn't the absolute dream).

### **Building the seed deck**

So far all your work has been the preparation phase of deckbuilding. Now you get to the actual building stage. This is actually much easier than all the stuff you did before. You already have a good idea of what you want to do, you have the missions you want to play, you know your affiliations and you have set aside your personnel. First, build the seed deck. Set aside the missions, all Dilemmas, the Doorways and Facilities you want to use and other seedable cards. Do not at first care the least bit of whether the cards are good or not. If you can legally seed it, assume you'll seed it. Now count the seed cards (except the missions of course). 30 or less? See, I told you. Some of the cards might not do much for you, but if the ability works in your favor even once during the tournament, you've done better than by not seeding the card. One special consideration goes to the AU Door in OTSD play. You might consider putting it in your deck in the hopes of nullifying a Temporal Rift or a Revolving Door or getting through a Q-Net. Sure, all these are good uses, but consider the probabilities. The chance for your opponent to have a Rift is just 10% and you can sit it out. The chance for a Revolving Door is 2.5%. And a Q-Net (35% chance for opponent to have one) you can pass with two Diplomacy. And the chance of them actually drawing it in the first ten turns is half that. Plus your chance of drawing the AU Door by then is also only 50%. So, you have pretty much a 12% chance to do something sensible at all with the AU Door and then it's likely a single ticket through a Q-Net, not typically a great option as you'd have no way back home. Compare this to the probability of having to retract a ship with your Space-Time Portal (around 30-40% in my experience) and then still wanting to play an AU card. So, while it might very occasionally be a better choice to put the AU Door in your draw deck, typically you should seed it. Ignore this rule only if you have a sound justification for doing so. One last thing, only relevant for formats involving somewhat recent packs: if you get a seedable Hidden Agenda, regardless how bad and useless, **seed it!** Yes, even that Dominion-only card with no Founder, Jemmie or Vorta in your whole bunch of cards. Your opponent doesn't know what it is and they will fear a HQ: Defensive Measures (if any DS9 is in the card pool), Fair Play (likewise for Dominion) or other nasty, reducing their courage in attempting potentially lucrative but possibly disastrous moves. And as those win more often than they lose, you should have an interest in preventing them. In the rare case you do have over 30 cards and have to decide which one(s) to leave out, keep at least one Hidden Agenda (if you have one) and three outposts. Setting up a network of outposts at a distance of 7 to 8 span from each other allows you to easily set up a multi-ship transportation chain able to ferry your personnel across more than half of the spaceline in one turn. Do not however go below 21 Dilemmas when you have more than 30 seeds – you will want them. One last pointer here: When in a format where you can likely steal missions, do not remove your absolutely weakest Dilemmas (I'll talk about the "null seed" strategy later) but rather cards that have a weak effect and low but existing requirements to pass. Archer, Microvirus or Iconian Computer Weapon are such

cards – you need one or two specific classifications to pass them unstopped, but their effect is rather limited.

### **Completing the Draw Deck**

The last step in making your Sealed Deck happen is building your draw deck. You already have the core – your personnel base. Now place with that four ships (if you have any way to download a ship) or five ships (if you do not have such a way). When selecting ships, RANGE is the most important stat; you will want as many 8 or higher RANGE ships as you can. Slow ships with RANGE 6 cause you to lose a substantial number of turns crawling from one mission to the next while attempting to get to the one mission your current skill set can solve. RANGE 8 virtually assures you can move two locations at a time and with RANGE 9 you even have a good shot at moving three cards at once.

Now for the Equipment. In very broad terms: Don't, unless you have to. When you have selected an Equipment card for possible inclusion, ask yourself "Could I get this off a personnel, too?" If yes, better include the personnel – you get INTEGRITY, CUNNING, STRENGTH **and** skills off a personnel – off an Equipment you get only one of these four. The best Equipment are typically weapons (and those are the only one you'll normally consider unless your deck is really low on a specific classification). Equipment that add one skill based on a classification can sometimes help you in a pinch, but they need two conditions to be worthwhile: You have a severe shortage of the skill provided and at least a decent number of the classification needed to use the equipment. Three is a good start (if you are really in need of the skill added), but the equipment only starts getting truly useful once you have five. Also, be somewhat careful with equipment that grant SCIENCE in an OTSD environment – you are risking to lose your Scotty or Bev Crusher to an Unscientific Method. Lastly, PADDs. They are usually not worth it in OTSD or SDII play. Your personnel are high CUNNING already and there's not too much requiring high CUNNING values. Plus, you can typically get the approximately 8 CUNNING a PADD affords you by keeping one more personnel, getting not only the attribute but the INTEGRITY, STRENGTH and skills as well. However, in DS9 play, a PADD suddenly becomes a valuable asset due to the Clan People Dilemma. You need people with CUNNING 8 and higher here and most Bajorans and Cardassians are CUNNING 7. And as Clan People is a common card, you can pretty much assume you'll encounter it, so a PADD can make the difference between a mission solved or not solved. After adding the ships and Equipment, look through your Events and Interrupts (and other "verb" cards) for what you will want to use. Be critical about those – you should always ask yourself if the card is worth more in your deck than your least useful personnel. Generally, if you believe the card will net you at least a third to half a turn of an advantage when you happen to draw it (slightly less when it's an Interrupt that costs you no card play), you will want to include it.

Examples:

- Kivas Fajo: Collector draws three cards. You gain the equivalent of one quarter (namely the card draw) of three turns each. Your total benefit is thus  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a turn.
- Rogue Borg Mercenaries stops a ship for a turn. Not always will your opponent be using this as his only ship, but often he will. Thus, the Rogue Borg is worth about half a turn (he still gets his card play and draw).

- Thine Own Self removes one or two personnel from play for quite some time if your opponent redshirts. This is a 1½ turn advantage, but not in every game does the situation come up. Still, the card comes up as useful rather often and you can count half a turn at the least.

### **Slimming it down**

Once you are this far, count your draw deck. If it is below 30 cards, you need to add more cards – most likely verb cards as you already have all useful personnel and the correct number of ships. This case is rather rare however. If exactly 30, congratulations, you are done. If above 30, you will want to at least consider slimming it – and if you are over 35 cards, you **will** want to slim your deck. No Sealed Deck should ever have more than 35 cards, and even if you are in the 31 to 34 range, you will want to recheck whether you truly need everything. Obviously your first consideration in the slimming stage is personnel (in all other card types you only included what is really worth it, so you will not want to cut them out again). A personnel that does not contribute a skill to any mission, does not have ENGINEER, SCIENCE, Computer Skill, Diplomacy, SECURITY or MEDICAL and does not field a high INTEGRITY is a candidate for removal. Be careful when evaluating mission skills though – even when you don't need a single Astrophysics in your mission selection, you should remember that in Sealed, you can often steal missions, especially universal ones, so you should keep at least one, preferably two of skills commonly found on opponent's missions in the respective format. When you're done slimming, you're ready to play.

(An annotated sample of deck building by this system can be found in the decks section)

### **On the topic of sleeving**

Okay... you just pulled five rares. You are anxious to keep them intact. But you want to win the tournament, too. Tell you what: Don't waste your valuable deckbuilding time sleeving. The cards will survive one game and if you play halfway fast, you have the ten minutes you need for sleeving after the first game.

### **The Seed Phase**

The seed phase is often seen as the easiest part of Sealed Deck play and in many ways it probably is. You have more chances to do a needed action even after a missed opportunity, mostly because an opponent will often not react in the particular way that would thwart your plans. However, there are still several strategies worthy of mentioning for the seed phase:

**Arranging missions:** While you cannot do much wrong in the mission phase, there are still two things you should care about. One is your outpost placement – if you only have one outpost and one place to seed it at, try to keep this place close to the middle of the spaceline, giving you much faster access to your missions. This of course only works if you draw that mission reasonably early. On the same note, if you see one of the missions that yell “outpost here” (e.g. Establish Relations in an OTSD) coming up on your

opponent's side, you can try to keep it as close to the edge as possible if you do not have a more important placement goal to pursue (getting your own game going faster is much more important than a chance of hurting your opponent somewhat, especially as she might have a second outpost and reduce all your attempts in this category to nothing). The second mission strategy only applies when you play a deck that does not have all compatible cards. In this case, keep two halves of the spaceline, one for one incompatible group and one for the other. Missions that can be attempted by either should of course go with the group that has the better chance of solving it. While seeding missions, add all missions from one group on the left end and all missions from the other group on the right end of the spaceline. The benefit is that you'll get to the right missions for your people much faster.

**The Misseed:** While misseeding now carries a substantial penalty (you cannot solve the mission), it still has its place in Sealed Deck. Especially when your opponent goes 6 space or 6 planet, you will have Dilemmas you cannot legally seed under their missions and will probably wind up with less than 12 usable Dilemmas. Now this is a bad thing as it will mean you have less than 2 Dilemmas for at least some of your opponent's missions – a fact you do not want to advertise. So in this case you will want at least some misseeds, preferably under missions you cannot solve anyway. Also, placement of a misseed is crucial. If you have a halfway good wall (or stopper) to place behind it and have any hopes to steal the mission, put it so that it is encountered first, leaving the mission open for you if the opponent gets stuck in the wall. If on the other hand, you cannot solve the mission or do not have a good stopper or wall available, instead place the misseed to be encountered last so you will leave your opponent wondering what's next after his redshirt eliminated the Dilemma

**The Null Seed:** A Null Seed is a Dilemma that will not have any effect on you. Basically it does function like a misseed without actually hurting your ability to solve the mission. Now this is a good thing – a mission with two Null seeds you can easily solve is as good as yours. The opponent will not know you null-seeded and be careful about going in while you can steal without any fears as soon as you have the requirements. Null seeds make particularly good seeds for a one-requirement mission like Study Stellar Collision or Relief Mission – the opponent will never solve those on the first turn (either they report a redshirt and go through the seeds or they report a personnel capable of solving the mission and intend to send a redshirt on turn 2 instead of risking the person), so the mission is yours as long as you get a personnel able of solving it into your starting hand. Many Null Seed cards are also Space / Planet, so you have them available for any mission you really want to steal soon. Null Seeds combine exceptionally well with Artifacts.

**Biased Dilemmas:** Some Dilemmas you pull are biased to one player. If you have seven ENGINEER in your deck, a Make Us Go is much easier for you to pass than for the opponent, while your lone Suna as MEDICAL makes Hippocratic Oath much tougher for you than for that person on the other side of the table. Accordingly, you will want to seed Dilemmas biased in your favor at a mission that you will **definitely** want to steal away from your opponent, making it hard for him and easy for you while Dilemmas biased towards your opponent should go under missions you do not mind too much giving away because you cannot solve them anyway and, preferably, they are not too high in points or

way towards the end of the spaceline and thus less attractive because of the turns to it takes to get there.

**Self-seeding:** As you might have concluded, one common strategy in Sealed Deck is stealing missions. If you have substantially more than 12 Dilemmas, you will thus want to protect your own missions as well by adding one Dilemma per mission under some or all of yours. These should be weak to moderately difficult Dilemmas but not null seeds and definitely not misseeds! Unlike constructed play where you'll usually want to get your card in the first-encountered slot, you will want to encounter your own Dilemmas last in Sealed, thus keeping the advantage of knowing what is seeded while your opponent does not have this knowledge. Of course this self-seeding does not apply if it is clear your opponent cannot solve your missions from the fact they have a 3-way-treaty out (in OTSD) or are obviously playing an affiliation that cannot solve your missions (sometimes happens in DS9 Sealed). In that case, you want each and every Dilemma under your opponent's missions.

## **The facility phase**

This last part of the seed phase is the fastest and easiest, yet there are a few things you might want to consider:

- If you have only one Outpost, try to keep it near the middle of the spaceline if possible. You'll be less susceptible to movement-restricting cards (like Q-Net) and you'll arrive at your missions just that much faster.
- If you have several outposts, it is a good idea to space them apart in a distance equivalent to your ships' RANGE. This way, you can have safe docking points every turn and you can easily report a ship where it'll extend your moving range immediately.
- NEVER place an outpost at an opponent's space mission if you can avoid it. Even if you want to steal that mission, you need a ship anyway and thus your outpost is just as well placed at the mission next to it while not giving away the fact that you want to steal that particular mission. However, if you want to steal a planet and have a good chance to draw the required personnel in the first three turns, by all means save a turn and seed the outpost right there.
- If you have several outposts, seed your first at an inconspicuous location (your own mission, any Establish Relations, etc) and watch what your opponent is doing. You can then seed the second at or near the mission(s) you want to steal or change your plans and match his placement in the hopes of outsmarting a theft attempt.

## **Playing the deck**

So you have the optimum deck, you have seeded well, you have hopefully remembered where you placed the null seeds and/or easy combos you want to steal through and with that there's only one part left to winning the game: actually playing it out. And while this is the most fun part, it's also the one I cannot give you a complete guide for. You will not be able to plan as much as in all the preparation stages, things will not occur in any predetermined sequence and there will be situations that can never be covered by a

guidebook unless it's a full doctorate thesis. Still, there are a lot of tactical tips and I'll just present them in random order as they jump into my mind.

**Priorities:** The question of what to do first is answered by your preparation. Your absolute first priority is any mission you want to steal and have placed an Artifact at. You do not want your opponent to get your Horga'hn or Time Travel Pod, so make sure you're there first. Preventing your opponent from getting your key Artifact is vital and worth every resource, including using up your Reflection Therapy.

After getting the Artifact (or in the likely case you had none to start with), you will want to go after the contested missions. Contested missions are (a) those you want to steal and (b) those you assume your opponent will want to steal. If they place an Outpost at your mission or between two easy space missions of yours, this should trigger a mental alert. You are likely susceptible to theft in that area.

Once you have secured what you can out of the contested missions, your order of attempting the rest is likely determined by what skills you have available. If however you have two options, one each planet and space, you should prefer a planet mission if you just need one more mission to win (you can redshirt easily) and do the space mission first if you still need two to win (planet redshirting tends to cost you a few personnel which you might later miss during the space attempt). Rule of thumb here: If in doubt, a planet mission is your last mission.

**Thwarting mission theft:** Sealed Deck games are won by winning the contested missions and not letting the opponent get anything for free. Whenever you attempt a contested mission, make sure you can complete the mission on the same turn you hit the last Dilemma. This means (a) have the skills available and (b) make absolutely sure they cannot be stopped! In practice, this means that you need two ships to successfully go for a contested space mission - one that can get stopped if needs be and one that will then reap the rewards.

Also please remember that scoring a clearly contested mission is not just worth the printed mission value but effectively twice that - not only do you secure 25, 30 or 35 points, but at the same time you prevent your opponent from getting them. By this rule, it is sometimes worth using a Reflection Therapy early to gain a skill you have multiples of but cannot seem to draw fast. A game looks a lot different if you can run it from a 60-0 lead instead of trailing 25-35.

**If your opponent cannot steal but you can:** If this lucky situation occurs, you have a decisive advantage, namely that you can secure your win before you have 100 points. If, in this situation, you are able to steal three missions, you probably do not have 100 points yet, but the points remaining available to your opponent are less than 100, allowing you to go for your last mission at a very leisurely pace. Also, even stealing two missions will ensure they typically need to solve all four of their remaining missions (there are few 35+ point missions available in Sealed) and thus it'll take them a long time to draw all their skills. Rule of thumb: Two stolen missions against a three-way is 90% of a win.

**Battle:** Sealed Deck is a matter of speed and unfortunately for the trigger-happy, the STCCG battle rules are slightly biased against the attacker in this regard because as the attacker, you need to stop people on your turn to make the attack (losing their use for other purposes) while the defender does not suffer this disadvantage. In general, it is a good idea to battle if one of the following conditions is met:

- You can immediately destroy a significantly staffed ship. By significant I mean having at least one key crewmember or any three personnel aboard. (A key crewmember is defined as any personnel having MEDICAL, ENGINEER or a skill for a mission if no other of opponent's personnel on the table have that ability).
  - You can assure the destruction of the ship in two turns (because it will not be able to reach an Outpost nor can any other ship reach it). The same minimum damage caused as above applies, with one personnel added to compensate for the extra turn.
  - You can break a ship chain. Especially in Sealed, chains tend to develop with abandoned, empty ships being spaced out by their RANGE, allowing instant transportation across the spaceline. Breaking a ship chain does not only cost your opponent a turn when they want to move across the gap but also gives you a great opportunity for an attack on a vulnerable ship later on.
  - You have a 50% or better chance to kill a key personnel in a personnel battle. Watch out for low-STRENGTH high-skill personnel like Scotty - they are almost guaranteed kills if you have a few strong people to attack with or a weapon.
  - You can destroy your opponent's only ship and they cannot immediately download one.
  - Your personnel and ships have nothing better to do and you can gain any advantage. This last one is often overlooked. If you are sitting at your outpost waiting for a key skill, you might as well use the time to cause some damage. Send out a strike team to kill a Suna stranded in a Hippocratic Oath, damage a ship or two to slow them down. Any advantageous action is better than no action, regardless how small the advantage is.
- Preemptive action:** Plan a turn or two ahead. If you are aiming at a mission 14 span away from your outpost and need to still report one key personnel for it, you will be able to solve it next turn if you have two ships sitting at your facility. Staff one (preferable the one with higher SHIELDS), move it out to the halfway point. Next turn, report the personnel and daisy-chain your ships.
- Or: If you know you need to play a Reflection Therapy from hand to get a crucial skill, make sure you divide up your personnel in a way that allows you to play it (Treachery > Honor) the turn before or you'll be stuck with an unplayable card. Advanced players can take this one step further and preempt two turns of action. I'd not recommend going farther than two turns as things will change a lot on the spaceline, there is potential for miscalculation and in the end, working three turns ahead will typically end you up with no bigger benefit than just working two turns ahead - and often less due to a small error or opponent's interference.
- Keep key cards:** Do not waste a RBM or Docking Procedures on a one-turn gain in the early game when there is no immediate contest. You can always use such a card for this minimum effect at any point in the game, so it does not hurt to hold them for a while to see whether you can get a better effect (and you'll thank me for this hint after the first time you barely nabbed a contested mission because of a RBM you kept handy).
- Know the cards:** There are not too many different Dilemmas to worry about in Sealed, so know their requirements and effects. If you hold several crucial Interrupts, do not attempt a space mission without SCIENCE (Iconian Computer Weapon). If you have ample personnel, do not attempt a planet with less than INTEGRITY 33 (Alien Parasites). If you don't have ample personnel but two ships or a ship and a facility, make sure the attempting redshirt comes from a ship or facility nobody else is on (because of the same Dilemma). If, in a close endgame, you just need one more mission to win and



there is only one Dilemma left, redshirt not one or two but *three* personnel - I once lost a game to that mistake, as my opponent held a Thine Own Self. Regardless of any ifs, do NOT attempt a space mission with more than one undocked ship present at the location. Borg Ships are rare, but they tend to strike at the worst moment. Keep your second ship next door and move in (or away) once you've seen the Dilemmas.

Also, don't forget to count down the Dilemmas you know that are out there (this applies especially in OTSD). You cannot unexpectedly hit a second Hippocratic Oath or Armus: Sticky unless you forgot where you placed your own.

**Composing Medium-size crews:** Do not forget that there is more to mission attempts than the classic redshirt and the all-out megacrew attempt. While these two make up the majority of attempts in Sealed Deck, a judiciously composed partial crew is often an easy way to gain a turn on your opponent. If, in space, you bring SCIENCE, ENGINEER, MEDICAL and OFFICER, you are proof from being stopped by all three available common Premiere space Dilemmas (and from quite a number of uncommon ones, too). Three to four personnel, almost as effective busting Dilemmas as a megacrew (and you are risking much less in case of a Borg Ship or Barclay's).

**Know probabilities:** STCCG is a game of incomplete information. You do not know what cards you are going to draw, you do not know what cards your opponent has. But you do know how probable specific outcomes are. If you have three Geology left in 18 draw deck cards, your chance of drawing one in the next two turns is approximately 6 in 18 or 1 in 3. The chance of your opponent having pulled a Telepathic Alien Kidnappers in a Starter Deck II is 13 in 121. Information like this will help you decide the more probable winning way if neither is certain and you only have one or two turns left.

**Play reasonably fast:** Yes, I have told you a lot of things. Commit them to your mind and use them. But don't forget that a timed win is only a half win. So keep in mind you have only one hour and also keep in mind your opponent will take some of it, too.

## After the tournament

So you've done all you were told and reaped the rewards. You just won a Sealed Event and nabbed a nice prize. At this point, before you leave the tournament hall, take a minute to sort your cards, take only those you really want (aka the rares and the occasional useful uncommon you have too few of) and offer the rest to newbies who are not as fortunate to have great card collections. Newbies are somewhat common at Sealed events (they don't yet have the card collection to compete in constructed) and if you help them build their collections, they're more likely to come back for more.

## Other formats

Most of this guide so far was based on OTSD, the most generic and most common Sealed format (most things I can tell you about OTSD hold true in other formats) and base of a number of variant formats. It is thus the first format the aspiring Sealed player should master, especially as it's also the base for the "King of Sealeds", namely Booster Draft. A few hints towards other formats, from simplest to most complex and strategic:

**Starter Deck II and related formats:** This format is characterised by the Memory Wipe card. While it allows you to mix all affiliations, it will also not override attack restrictions and thus make successful battling much less likely. Additionally, you'll often have very few and weak Dilemmas in this type, the basic Starter II averages just six to nine, so speed and good matches between mission skill requirements and personnel skills become even more important. Cards like Red Alert, Temporal Rift and Static Warp Bubble become much more important, because the built-in checks and balances for these cards in OTSD are not present in the Starter II. Don't forget an extra ship in your deck, you have no Spacedoor. Oh, and keep it to 30 cards, your cards will be bad enough as they are.

**Deep Space Nine:** Due to the lack of starters, this format has become much rarer on the tournament scene than it deserves to be. It is still a very fun and balanced Sealed format (ask your TD to make it one starter and four boosters though instead of the commonly used one and three - the game gets more interesting with the slightly increased options). The absence of many nuisance cards like Thine Own Self, Armus: Sticky Situation and Alien Parasites makes this format ideal for extensive redshirting. Docking Procedures makes for a RBM replacement in this format and you can very well use Activate Tractor Beam as a speedup card for yourself if you have a few ships with Tractor Beams (towing a second ship along). Most other Events and Interrupts aren't worth it unless they let you download stuff, i.e. gain you the equivalent of free draws and plays. Don't forget that several useful cards (like Establish Landing Protocols) can seed. Typical good DS9 Sealed Decks will contain 32-34 cards; tuning down to 30 will usually come at the expense of a needed skill. Again, don't forget the fifth ship - no Spacedoor in sight !

**Player's Choice:** Your booster choice depends on the base product used and of course availability. If you are playing based on OTSD, it is often most advantageous to just grab four Deep Space Nine packs or, if you're feeling more like playing Klingon, four Trouble with Tribbles packs. In the DS9 packs you'll quite often find a treaty, giving your solid Federation / Nonaligned base a second affiliation to work with and good Dilemmas while TwT supplements your existing Klingons with skills they otherwise don't find much in commons and uncommons. However, TwT is a somewhat risky proposition as you might pull a majority of the wrong affiliation of personnel to go with your OTSD (Klingons if you got heavy Feds or vice versa). Of course, if you get the Fed / Klingon Treaty or are willing to play Three-way, you'll find an unmatched skill selection in TwT.

In SD2-based formats, you can go for anything but Dominion and First Contact; you'll find good personnel anywhere. Consider at least one AU pack to improve your Dilemma selection.

First Contact or Dominion can only be used well in one specific situation, namely in the (rare) player's choice where you have to tell your opponent your pack choices. In this case, grab one pack (and only one) of either of the two. You'll notice their respect concerning the Balancing Act or Fair Play you just might have pulled. Metagaming sometimes works wonders.

**Progressive Sealed:** You get new packs each round. Ideally and most interestingly they are from different expansions each time, changing the metagame with every game you play. The ultimate progressive format is Farpoint Sealed aka Five Year Mission Sealed. Start out with an OTSD and an extra AU pack. Play round 1. Add two QC, play round 2. Continue this through all 8 (or soon more) expansions. This format has proven most enjoyable with a house rule that you can, at any place, have exactly two affiliations (any

two) work together. Not as broad as the general Memory Wipe and you will not get stuck with wrong or no treaties either. The history of STCCG compressed to a single day of intense tournament play !

Anyway, the most critical thing to remember in progressive is to, after each round, treat your cards like a new deck. Don't be shy to make major changes to your deck if you pull a key card later on. In the last Farpoint progressive I played (and won with a perfect 7-0), I changed affiliations twice during the tourney and reevaluated my missions every round. And even if you didn't get a single useful card in your packs, consider the metagame. You might not have pulled the Balancing Act or Fair Play, but how about your next opponent ? Needless to say, you cannot do well in progressive without keeping your extra cards accessible and sorted.

**Booster Draft:** Finally, the ultimate Sealed event. Booster Draft is Sealed Constructed or, if you prefer, Constructed Sealed. You are still stuck with having only 95 cards, the same amount you get in a normal OTSD, but you have the flexibility to make them match better. In a draft, your first priority will be to determine the affiliation(s) you will be playing. As you do not want to be stuck with the three-way, one of your first picks will often be a treaty if one comes around. As long as you don't have a treaty matching your primary affiliation choice, there are very few cards (the most powerful Dilemmas or truly awesome personnel come to mind) you'd want to draft over a treaty. Until you get a treaty, concentrate on one affiliation to draft. You can splash in a second one if you get a few good personnel there, hoping to draw the required treaty later, but it is mostly advantageous to draft a fair or mediocre personnel of your primary affiliation over a good one of your secondary. Of course this does not hold for truly outstanding personnel, the chances gained there are great (Treaties are common) and you'll also deny an opponent that card.

While drafting, also watch what cards disappear first and which stay. If Federation personnel tend to be passed a lot on the second pack, you know nobody in your draft group is grabbing heavy Feds and thus you can usually afford to take first pick on the third or fourth pack with another card and be somewhat sure the Feddie will come around for you to take on the second pick (does not go for Picard or Data though).

Generally people will draft good personnel and any kind of Dilemma first along with Treaties and the card-drawers (Kivas or the Traveler), then nuisance cards or mediocre personnel, then ships and finally missions, facilities and other cards. You can take advantage of this by occasionally letting slip one good card you don't really need (like another MEDICAL if you already have four) in order to get ahead of that draft order and nab the best cards of the "lesser" categories from a whole round of packs. The same works with what I said in the last paragraph - if you know Romulans are unpopular, you can let a Tarus go around once and first secure a Dilemma or important Interrupt while in a draft group with several Romulan players, you'll need to grab him immediately if you are still in need of SCIENCE and Stellar Cartography.

While drafting, keep track of what you have. You want two Diplomacy, two MEDICAL (plus Suna), one or two SECURITY (again, plus Suna), three ENGINEER, two SCIENCE, two OFFICER and two copies of everything you need to solve your missions. For the OTSD premium missions this is Leadership, Geology, Navigation, Physics, Astrophysics or Stellar Cartography and Treachery on top of the package outlined above. Once you draft missions (and you should) be sure to adapt the list in your head. Also,

keep track of whether your cards are space-biased or planet-biased and draft missions accordingly in the hopes of going all space or all planet. Draft at least 5-7 Premiere Dilemmas (you'll typically get 5 from the AU pack) and 4 ships. Don't shy away from weak Dilemmas, they'll often be left as middle picks (6th to 10th) and are great drafts. Not only do you get a seed more, but you also know about the power of the null seed, so get those Thought Fires and Empathic Echos. In a middle pick, you'll always want a weak Dilemma over a weak to mediocre personnel unless you're absolutely desperate for the classification.

## Recommended practice

At this point, I'll ask you to, for five minutes, forget that STCCG is a game. Think of it as a sport. You are going to tournaments, you want to win, so this analogy is not that far off. And like in any sport, there are some recommended exercises that can make you better.

**Deckbuilding exercise:** Grab a Sealed Deck of the type you want to practice from an online Sealed Deck generator (one of the best is located on the web at [http://www.netcologne.de/~nc-rattayro/sealed\\_deck.html](http://www.netcologne.de/~nc-rattayro/sealed_deck.html)), take the cards out of your collection and build the deck. Before you go out to a tournament you have not done before, do this about five times, no more than two runs per day. You'll want to finish your deck in 16 to 20 minutes - remember you have already seen the cards when starting the clock and they are already sorted. Once you reach some general proficiency in Sealed Deck (aka when you hit 1600 rating), you'll want to do this with face down stacks, making sure any opponent in a tournament hall will not see your cards.

**Sorting:** If you seem to spend too much time sorting, take a stack of 200 common and uncommon cards of your chosen expansion (use a good mix of types) and sort them to face-down stacks using your preferred card type sorting system. You will want to complete this exercise in eight minutes or less while having no more than two errors. This means you'll have your Sealed Deck ripped open and sorted in less than 4 minutes with no more than one mistake in a real tournament.

**Card knowledge:** Put yourself to the test. Take the deck left over from your last constructed tourney, and before you put the cards back in the binders or boxes, shuffle them up and sort them by rarity (verifying against cardlists). Grab a Sealed Deck list online and see how fast you can locate the rares (or uncommons). Ask yourself a test question ("list all FC Dilemmas", "list all skills needed to overcome all Premiere Dilemmas available in space", etc.) and answer it on a piece of paper, later verifying against cardlists or your collection.

**Play speed:** If you tend to exceed time, you can play dry-run Sealed Deck games at home. Make a stack of all common / uncommon missions from the sets used in the type you want to practice. Make another two with Dilemmas, one for planets and one for space (you will want about 40 Dilemmas in each stack, more commons, but don't forget to have at least one of the uncommons). Then make a Sealed Deck as above (deckbuilding exercise). Create a spaceline using six random "opponent" missions. Seed three Dilemmas from the stacks under each of your missions, one under each of opponent's. Now play your deck as solitaire, attempting to win in the least number of turns possible. Count turns, multiply that number by three and add the time you took in

minutes. If this is 56 or less (with a play time of less than 25 minutes and not significantly over 12 turns), you're in fair shape. If you consistently reach 48, you're good. 40 is world-class. If on the other hand, you have taken more than 15 turns or more than 25 minutes, you need to work more, because that game would not have been a full win in a tournament for you.

**Booster Draft:** You can practice booster draft for free, online, with real opponents from all over the world (and some of the world's best Sealed players) at [http://www.kedanya.org/cgi-bin/b\\_draft/b\\_draft.pl](http://www.kedanya.org/cgi-bin/b_draft/b_draft.pl) (one-time registration and a valid email address required). Best time to meet people there is around 3 to 5 pm EST every day. Meet up in the Kedanya Chat (see the "Online Resources" listing in this guide) and arrange a session.

## Conclusion

As you have hopefully seen, Sealed Deck is a versatile and strategically interesting format with a lot of small and large things to think and worry about if you want to play it well. It's unfortunately been ignored a lot on the tournament circuit and falsely been discredited as a beginner's format or pure luck by many players. What is true is that there is a bit more luck than in constructed and you won't be able to go undefeated in every tourney. Occasionally, a beginner will pull such great cards that all skill won't help. But that's reflected in the ratings - an excellent constructed player is 1750 and a world's top player is over 2000 while in Sealed those marks are closer to 1625 and 1800 respectively. And if you concentrate more on the advanced formats - draft, progressive and choice, you'll find you can use a lot of skill to compensate for the luck of the draw even more. It is possible to maintain a constant winning ratio over 80% in Sealed and have an unbroken winning streak of 20 Sealed tournament games to record (been there, done that). So next time you think about going to a tournament, try Sealed and you will not regret it.

## Building an OTSD

Those of you who frequently play in sealed deck tournaments may have noticed that, just like in constructed, the same players tend to win over and over in spite of the additional random factor. In this section, we generate a random Official Tournament Sealed Deck and give it to our top sealed deck players to see what they can do with it.

Here is what our writers were working from, arranged by card type:

Di	Abandon Ship!	Mi	Excavation
Di	Archer	Mi	Explore Interstellar Matter
Di	Armus - Sticky Situation	Mi	Impose Order
Di	Cosmic String Fragment	Mi	Investigate Incursion
Di	Cytherians	Mi	Investigate Time Continuum
Di	Edo Probe	Mi	Mineral Survey
Di	Hippocratic Oath	Mi	Relief Mission
Di	Hunter Gangs	Mi	Study Stellar Collision
Di	Iconian Computer Weapon	Mi	Test Propulsion Systems
Di	Make Us Go	Ob	Open Diplomatic Relations

Di	Male's Love Interest	Ob	Reflection Therapy
Di	Microbiotic Colony	Pe-F	Calloway
Di	Outpost Raid	Pe-F	Darian Wallace
Di	Phased Matter	Pe-F	Dr. Selar
Di	Thought Fire	Pe-F	Geordi La Forge
Di	Unscientific Method	Pe-F	Jenna D'Sora
Di	Worshiper	Pe-F	Lt. (j.g.) Picard
Do	Space-Time Portal	Pe-F	McKnight
Do	Spacedoor	Pe-F	Mendon
Eq	Federation PADD	Pe-F	Montgomery Scott
Eq	Klingon Disruptor	Pe-F	Norah Satie
Eq	Klingon PADD	Pe-F	Simon Tarses
Eq	Romulan PADD	Pe-F	Sito Jaxa
Eq	Starfleet Type II Phaser	Pe-K	Dukath
Ev	Baryon Buildup	Pe-K	K'Tal
Ev	Espionage: Romulan On Federation	Pe-K	Klag
Ev	Espionage: Romulan On Federation	Pe-K	Korris
Ev	Espionage: Romulan On Federation	Pe-K	Kromm
Ev	Masaka Transformations	Pe-K	Vekma
Ev	Rishon Uxbridge	Pe-K	Vekma
Ev	Tetryon Field	Pe-N	Bok
Ev	Treaty: Federation/Romulan/Klingon	Pe-N	Dathon
Ev	Treaty: Romulan/Klingon	Pe-N	Gorta
Ev	Yellow Alert	Pe-N	Gorta
Fa/Op-F	Federation Outpost	Pe-N	Narik
Fa/Op-N	Husnock Outpost	Pe-N	Roga Danar
In	Asteroid Sanctuary	Pe-N	Suna
In	Countermanda	Pe-R	Jera
In	Emergency Transporter Armbands	Pe-R	Neral
In	Hail	Pe-R	Neral
In	Palor Toff - Alien Trader	Pe-R	Tallus
In	Palor Toff - Alien Trader	Q-Di/Ev	Hide and Seek
In	Phaser Burns	Sh-F	Type VI Shuttlecraft
Mi	Covert Installation	Sh-F	U.S.S. Miranda
Mi	Diplomacy Mission	Sh-N	Darmok
Mi	Establish Relations	Sh-N	Tama
Mi	Evacuation	Sh-N	Yridian Shuttle
		Sh-N	Zibalian Transport

First let's look at what Helge did with the deck, presented with a minimum of commentary:

<b>Seed Deck</b>		<b>Draw Deck</b>	
Di	Abandon Ship!	Ev	Treaty: Federation/Romulan/Klingon
Di	Archer	Ob	Reflection Therapy
Di	Armus - Sticky Situation	Pe-F	Calloway
Di	Cosmic String Fragment	Pe-F	Darian Wallace
Di	Cytherians	Pe-F	Dr. Selar
Di	Edo Probe	Pe-F	Geordi La Forge
Di	Hippocratic Oath	Pe-F	Jenna D'Sora
Di	Hunter Gangs	Pe-F	Lt. (j.g.) Picard
Di	Iconian Computer Weapon	Pe-F	McKnight
Di	Make Us Go	Pe-F	Mendon
Di	Male's Love Interest	Pe-F	Montgomery Scott
Di	Microbiotic Colony	Pe-F	Sito Jaxa

Di	Outpost Raid	Pe-K	Dukath
Di	Phased Matter	Pe-K	K'Tal
Di	Thought Fire	Pe-K	Korris
Di	Unscientific Method	Pe-K	Kromm
Di	Worshiper	Pe-K	Vekma
Do	Space-Time Portal	Pe-K	Vekma
Do	Spacedoor	Pe-N	Bok
Ev	Treaty: Romulan/Klingon	Pe-N	Dathon
Fa/Op-F	Federation Outpost	Pe-N	Gorta
Fa/Op-N	Husnock Outpost	Pe-N	Gorta
Mi	Covert Installation	Pe-N	Narik
Mi	Diplomacy Mission	Pe-N	Roga Danar
Mi	Establish Relations	Pe-N	Suna
Mi	Excavation	Pe-R	Neral
Mi	Impose Order	Pe-R	Tallus
Mi	Relief Mission	Sh-F	Type VI Shuttlecraft
Ob	Open Diplomatic Relations	Sh-F	U.S.S. Miranda
Q-Di/Ev	Hide and Seek	Sh-N	Darmok
		Sh-N	Tama

Deck remarks:

While this deck is quite playable as a Fed only or as a Rom/Kli two-way, it truly shines when using the delayed 3-way strategy.

Keep Diplomacy Mission off to one side (preferably next to Excavation) and use Establish Relations as a K/R mission when starting out. The Spacedoor needs to go on the Husnock Outpost to be able to retrieve ships for either group. Your ability to solve some of the space missions (especially Test Propulsion Systems) is excellent, so you can go in for an early steal. Start moving early, you will need every point of RANGE later on, so making a quick redshirt trip to the side in the early turns of the game is a good idea unless you fear the opponent may then steal the mission. Go for a quick steal or two (Test Propulsion Systems is your prime target because you can solve it very easily and it helps you with badly needed RANGE. I just didn't want to put in my own deck because the deck is planet-based and the mission would attract all space Dilemmas, making it very tough to solve early, which is when you'd need it most)

So we have a two-part deck there, seeding the Romulan/Klingon treaty and with the 3-way treaty held in reserve. Now let's see what Ian, our other sealed deck writer, did with the same cards. His setup looks similar, but his deck is designed to work totally differently, as we shall see; I'll turn the rest of this section over to Ian:

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I have always loved sealed deck and feel that OTSD is probably the most interesting straight sealed deck you can play (booster draft is of course another matter). For the record, this deck was made within the 30 minutes allowed (in fact in reality shorter because I had to take the cards out of the binder as well).

My first impression was that this was the sealed deck of which nightmares are made. The first thing you look for is a two way treaty of which there was a ROM/KLG version. However, upon closer inspection, there were effectively only 2 Romulans and 7

(nondescript) Klingons. This basically meant I had 2 options. Play the 3 way treaty or use the Federation on their own. Using 1 affiliation is practically unheard of in sealed deck but I hate using the 3 way treaty because the ability to steal missions is so vital to success.

Upon inspection however, playing Federation only did not look like such a bad option. 12 Personnel + 7 Non-Aligned is not a bad number of personnel to start with. Looking over my Events and Interrupts it looked like I would have problems scraping together 30 useful seed cards anyway so I initially put all 19 into the deck. Next, in went the ships as they are a no-brainer. The 'Darmok' and 'Miranda' went in for general use and the 'Type VI Shuttle' as a single person carrier. The next thing I did was to look at my missions. It immediately became apparent that I would have a problem playing Federation only. In sealed deck it is always advisable to use either 6 planet missions or 6 space missions as there is no threat of 'Balancing Act'. However because of the lack of fed missions, the best I could do was 4 planets and 2 space. Instantly throwing all my (18) Dilemmas in, I had the nucleus of a deck in a little under 10 minutes. At this point I stopped and took stock of what I had and whether the deck I was proposing was viable. I noticed the following problems.

- 1) Lack of Diplomacy: Only a double Diplomacy on Dathon to get past Shakas and Q-Nets.
- 2) Mission Coverage: 2 of my missions required Diplomacy which I had little coverage of and one needed Geology (of which I had none).
- 3) Lack of Science (2) or any equipment with which to get it.
- 4) A huge redundancy in Engineers (10) of which I had no real use for. Not a flaw but still annoying.
- 5) No stalling Interrupts such as 'Rogue Borg', 'Temporal Rifts' or 'Loss of Orbital Stability'.

However, despite these drawbacks I thought the deck was fairly good in the pretty dire circumstances. These problems I never really managed to resolve but after adding my additional cards, my deck looked like this. My notes are included underneath the relevant cards.

Seed Deck (36 including Missions)

**Excavation**

**Test Mission**

**Explore Interstellar Matter**



These were to be my core missions that I would try to get near each other. I could complete any of them with relative ease (I have 4 Physics and 3 Astrophysics or Stellar Cartography).

### **Diplomacy Mission Establish Relations**

These were harder because they needed Diplomacy that could only come from Dathon or 'Reflection Therapy'. These would be the missions I would try and complete to win.

### **Mineral Survey**

No Geology so could only complete this with a 'Reflection Therapy'. I would not plan to complete this mission but my opponents, of course, have no way of knowing this.

### **18 Dilemmas**

No point in trying to make choices here so just throw them all in. I particularly like the idea of using 'Edo Probe' + 'Cytherians' at their highest point space mission. I would consider using 'Armus: Sticky Situation' as a self seed so I could, in an emergency, kill the personnel with the Reflection Therapy on them so I could Palor Toff for it and use it again.

### **Open Diplomatic Relations Treaty Klingon/Romulan**

Obviously I am not intending to use these and some might say that the slots would be better used for bluff seeds. They are seeded just in case a clever opponent works out from the lack of treaty (and Diplomacy Mission) that I am playing only Federation and hence which of his missions I can't steal.

### **Spacedoor Space-Time Portal**

Obvious choices. I can use the Space-Time Portal in an emergency to take some key personnel back to my hand.

### **Husnock Outpost Federation Outpost**

Again obvious choices. Unfortunately the Husnock Outpost will have to play at 'Establish Relations' unless your opponent plays a more suitable mission.

### **6 Bluff Seeds**

Take your pick. I always find using the unwanted rares particularly satisfying. Basically, put these with smaller combos on missions you can't steal. Always seed them first (to be encountered last) as this will create the illusion of more dilemmas even once attempts have been made.

### Draw Deck (30)

#### **Darmok**

Chosen over the 'Tama' obviously because it can be downloaded with Spacedoor

#### **Miranda**

In case only Federation personnel are available

#### **Type VI Shuttlecraft**

It's surprising how often in sealed deck you have 1 or 2 people at your outpost that you need to reunite with the bulk of your personnel.

#### **Gorta x 2**

I debated dropping a Gorta but thought the extra redundancy in Physics might come in handy for Test Mission..

#### **Dathon**

You need to draw him early and you need to protect him. Because there is no threat of 'Lack of Preparation', don't use him in Mission attempts unless you encounter a Shaka. He may also be needed for his high Integrity in an emergency, although because it is pure Fed, it already had a high average (over 5). For this reason, Norah Satie was dropped because she offered nothing other than Leadership which I already had a couple of and isn't really necessary.

#### **Narik**

#### **Bok**

#### **Roga Danar**

#### **Suna**

#### **Calloway**

#### **Darian Wallace**

#### **Dr Selar**

#### **Geordi La Forge**

#### **Jenna D'Sora**

#### **McKnight**

**Sito Jaxa**  
**Simon Tarses**  
**Montgomery Scott**

Some good personnel and also some very poor personnel. However, poor personnel are good redshirting material.

**Lt (j.g.) Picard**  
**Mendon**

These are your only Science. You may need to Masaka to hit one before you attempt missions.

**Reflection Therapy**

Will almost certainly be used for Diplomacy. If you absolutely must, Geology might be acceptable for Mineral Survey. Clear out the Dilemmas at the mission before you use Reflection Therapy for the skill.

**Starfleet Type II Phaser**

Your only useful bit of equipment. May come in handy for the odd Nausicaans or if your opponent starts an impromptu away team battle. The Federation Padd was originally included and then dropped on the grounds of virtual uselessness.

**Tetryon Field**

Included for no reason other than it plays for free at Explore Interstellar Matter or may slow down your opponent if you can spare a card play otherwise.

**Masaka Transformations**

A vital card. Needed for drawing Dathon or a Science personnel or if the last two cards in the list are stuck in your hand uselessly. If you are stuck with a rubbish hand at any point, this may be a lifesaver!

**Countermanda**

You'll be surprised how often this card is useful in sealed deck.

**Palor Toff - Alien Trader x 2**

Used primarily for Masaka and Reflection Therapy. Should not be used for Countermanda. This is a waste as your opponent will then know it is in your hand.

**Treaty: Federation/Romulan/Klingon**

## **K'Tal**

These may seem like wasted slots but they provide 1 last emergency shot at some Diplomacy and besides, they are only wasted slots if they could be replaced with something better or removed. There is nothing better and the deck is already 30 cards!

In conclusion this deck is unlikely to win any prizes. However it does go to show that if you get a hopeless draw in sealed deck you can salvage something. If I played this deck at a local sealed deck tournament I would expect to win at least a couple of games against less experienced players.

### **Constructed deck: Affiliation Overviews**

Often the key to doing well with an affiliation lies in understanding their strengths and weaknesses. By examining the strong and weak areas of each affiliation, we can better understand how to use them for maximum effect.

#### **Affiliation Overview: Klingons**

##### **“Today is a good day to die.”**

By Chris Brennan

Klingons have been around since the beginning of Trek. Back in the “good old days”, they were not very different from the Federation or Romulans; they were just another affiliation. In a way, the best things never change. Let’s examine...

- Good mission selection. Klingon missions are pretty easy. Many require skills you would need for dilemmas anyway, like Medical or Navigation. Others require skills that Klingons have to spare, like Officer or Honor. You can always find a mission you can solve easily. Klingons also have one of the easiest universal missions in the game, Bat’leth Tournament.
- Powerful free personnel. There are 17 free personnel at the Headquarters. While many may seem the same, Officers with Honor, don’t underestimate the power of playing lots of personnel no matter who they are. And, as I said above, they tend to have the right skills for Klingon missions.
- Ship battle capability. Universal K’vorts have descent Weapons, and 8 Range to track down opposing ships. Almost every unique K’vort has a matching commander to help enhance its attributes. Then there are personnel with battle-related abilities, like Martok and the Regent. There are also a decent number of Alternate Universe personnel and ships to drop with Space-Time Portal.
- Personnel battle capability. Klingons have naturally high strength, and also have Bat’leths to kill even more personnel each turn.
- Wide variety of Mission Specialists and Support Personnel. Klingons don’t have many ways to download personnel, but these 2 usually suffice. Most skills are

available on these under-skilled personnel; they even have K'mpec to get past Executive Authorization.

- Bonus points. Most Klingon decks can play Death Yell on over half their personnel. The Phoenix shows up quite often at their HQ. Then there's Arbiter of Succession. No other affiliation has an interrupt like that. Most Klingon decks can score a 2-mission win with missions protected by Fair Play. That's good if you spend a lot of time distracted by battle.
- Blood Oath. 4 of the most powerful personnel in the game, complete with their matching ships and all the Bat'leths you want.
- Empok Nor. This was practically made for Klingons, with all their different weapons. The weapons are not only a good benefit of commandeering, but also a good way to be able to clear opposing personnel out of Ops.
- K'chiQ. In short, the best personnel in the game. The ability to have any skill you want when you want it, for the small price of keeping her with another personnel. With ASP or DHW, it's easy to download a male Klingon instead of running one back to your outpost.
- Hero of the Empire. Point denial and an increase in your mission values at the same time. Any affiliation can use this card, but it was designed for Klingons. They don't need to limit their mission selection, as all missions in the typical Klingon deck probably have a Klingon icon on them already. And they can benefit from K-7 with the large number of Original Series personnel they have.

Sounds pretty good. Are they missing anything? Well, they're a little short on card drawing. Unless you include another affiliation, or commandeer Empok, there are few ways to consistently generate card draws. 34<sup>th</sup> Rule of Acquisition is good, but there is a real lack of Acquisition personnel to play it on. Arne Darwin is OK, but when you have to use cards to bring those Klingons to the present, you're using up those draws on support cards.

The solution to this problem lies in re-examining the Klingons' strengths. For all the powerful strategies mentioned above, each one takes very few cards to set up and maintain. That leaves plenty of room for Travelers or Fajos to provide card draws. It also leaves a lot of room for other support cards, like Uxbridge and Amanda, or any strategy-specific counters you may need. You could even play lots of non-aligned personnel and still have a deck based on the Great Hall or Blood Oath or whatever. Compare that to the percentage of a deck that has to be devoted to something like Visit Cochrane Memorial or Interrogation/Brainwash.

Furthermore, since each Klingon mini-strategy can be played with few cards, it's easy to mix and match. This gives the Klingons a lot of options for decks, which leads to great flexibility and variety. For example, you may see the Blood Oath personnel combined with AMS/ASP for support, or combined with a ship battle deck, or simply using the Oath to get enough personnel to pass Ferengi Infestation at Empok Nor. Klingon battle decks come so naturally that you can use almost any means to create an assault force. There are everything from free-at-the-HQ battle decks to AMS/Spacedoor armadas. Bat'leth Tournament mixed with Death Yells and other bonus points. Etc, etc.

This is why Klingons are great: they may not have one "perfect" strategy, but they can have a lot of options in one deck. They're not over-specialized. And that helps keep them

unpredictable. You never know when a Klingon deck might jump at a mission or turn to attack you.

So, while Klingons in many ways are still a “typical” affiliation, with lots of generic strategies, that is precisely what makes them so powerful.

## **Affiliation Overview: Romulans**

### **The Romulans**

By Ian Taylor

I am going to make a very bold statement at the start of this piece. The Romulans are the best overall affiliation in the game. I’m not just saying that because they have (again) won the World Championship but more because I think they have more strings to their bow than any other affiliation. Any style of player can probably find a Romulan deck that they are happy with, be it an armada, a fast mission solver or a ‘trick deck’. In what follows, I will try to give general points on how to make the most of the Romulan affiliation and then I will move on to the mechanics of specific Romulan decks.

#### History of the Romulan affiliation

Before that, however, I wish to give a brief history of the affiliation and which decks have been strong at various points in the game’s history. Despite what many people have argued, I feel that the Romulans have never been a weak affiliation. While some affiliations (notably Klingons, Dominion and now Cardassians) have gone for periods of time without being tournament viable there has been something in every expansion to ensure that Romulan players can still compete.

After the Premier and Alternate Universe sets, many players argued that the Romulans were the weakest of the 3 affiliations. They had no personnel to compete with the Federation’s 4 and 5 skill personnel from premier or ships to compete with the Klingons’ (at the time) powerful K’Vorts. What they did have, even at this stage, was a very tight mission group and the necessary personnel (when supplemented with non-aligned) to complete them. The only powerful tournament deck at the time was the speed deck using The Traveller, Red Alert and Kivas Fajo and although not as fast as the Federation Q-bypassing equivalent, the Romulan Treachery/Archaeology deck using Galathon was more robust due to it’s tight mission set.

After Q-Continuum, Romulans could finally compete for speed using the Sela’s Consort deck. This was a deck using the new security personnel ‘Telak’ and many ‘Soong Type Androids’. This was more efficient and a turn faster than previous speed decks because it did not need to play a Red Alert, as at the time Cybernetics allowed as many androids to report per turn as you wished. Variations of this, one of the first of many STA decks, dominated the tournament scene for many months. The First Anthology gave the

Romulans a further boost with the introduction of arguably (at the time) the best personnel in the game: Dr Telek R'Mor. This marked a shift in emphasis from planet to space missions and redshirting from outposts became the order of the day. The Romulan version of this deck (or Loca-R'Mor as it came to be called) was probably the most powerful of these new space decks because of the high point missions that could be completed with just Telek R'Mor and Nick Locarno. This deck played a large part in the 1997 World Championships.

Of course, after this the metagame was turned on its head by the First Contact expansion. Balancing Act removed unbalanced spacelines, Dead End stopped artifacts playing so big a part. Also, two new deck types became prevalent. Because of 'Assign Mission Specialists' (and Suna from the sealed deck product) thief decks became viable and 'Montana Missile Complex' gave rise to the highly annoying 'Wormhole to Montana' deck. The Romulans could be used for both of these decks at least as well as other affiliations and they also had their own powerful new deck, the 'Patrol Neutral Zone' deck. Although the Federation could also be used for this deck, Romulans had more options because of the ability to battle. Once 'Hide and Seek' had removed AMS-Q from the metagame, PNZ became possibly the most powerful deck type around. Even now, although very different from its original archetype, the PNZ deck is still going strong and a version has just won the 2000 World Championships.

After the Deep Space 9 expansion in summer 1998, PNZ was still powerful, although it was overtaken somewhat by new deck types. For the Romulans, these were mainly based on attempting opponents' missions using Espionage cards (often via the new card 'Plans of the Tal Shiar'). This could either be done to complete the missions yourself (overcoming the weak counter 'Defensive Measures') or to trip harmful Dilemmas such as 'The Sheliak' or 'Dal'rok' there. The new Cardassian/Romulan treaty was popular for this deck as the Romulans could be used for the espionage and the Cardassians then to download the necessary skills to the Nor. The other popular Romulan deck at the time was the complex Devidian Door/Ooby Dooby deck, which often used a Federation/Romulan treaty to maximise the quantity and quality of youth personnel available.

What followed was what I consider somewhat of a strange time for the game. Mission stealing was killed by 'Fair Play', which left Devidian Door/Ooby Dooby as the only broken big tournament tactic. However, as this required many Devidian Doors (as many as 20) and it was easy to defend against if you saw it coming, this saw surprisingly little tournament play between November 1998 and June 1999. The tournament scene was dominated mainly by battle decks and (then legal) download to hand/Remodulate decks. However, a strong Romulan deck emerged combining the existing Ooby Dooby strategy with the new Romulan Senators brought into play with 'Going to the Top'. This turned out to be a top tournament deck in the run up to the 1999 World Championship and a battling version of this finished 7<sup>th</sup> in the World Championship itself. The winner of the World Championship was also playing Romulan but without the Devidian Door option.

Despite being mainly concerned with Ferengi, Rules of Acquisition was a fantastic expansion for the Romulans as it provided the missing links to two very powerful decks. First, the 'Romulan Shuttle' and the 'Apnex' gave the Romulans a total of 3 ships that could be downloaded with 'Hidden Fighter' that also had matching commanders. This led to a very fast attack deck. Possibly the most powerful version of this used the '34<sup>th</sup> Rule of Acquisition' as a card drawing engine. The other key Romulan card in the expansion was 'The Continuing Committee' which meant that the Romulans had the best homeworld report for free options of all the affiliations. This was occasionally combined with 'Soong Type Androids' which freed up all card plays for Kivas Fajos. These new decks, when combined with old but still powerful decks such as PNZ and Telak R'Mor space initiated the beginning of an era of dominance for the Romulans.

This brings us to the Trouble with Tribbles. This expansion made the game a whole lot faster for all affiliations through cards such as 'Defend Homeworld' and 'Assign Support Personnel'. Combined with Senior Staff meeting, this meant that space missions could be completed very quickly giving an obvious advantage to Romulans whose space missions have high point values. The World Championship 2000 winning deck combined this with PNZ. 'Defend Homeworld' has also revitalised dedicated Romulan Soong Type Android decks as you can now download a cybernetics personnel (Telak) on your first turn. New AU Romulans and an AU ship now make them second only to the Federation for AU dropping capability. This can compliment the Soong Type Android deck quite nicely as the new AU personnel nicely fill the skill gaps that Tal Shiar and Soong Type Android personnel are missing. One last very innocuous card that has given the Romulans new possibilities is the Romulan/Bajoran treaty. This means that the Romulans now have a treaty with every affiliation except Ferengi (useful for tripping decks) and also have access to the adjacent Bajor region missions and powerful Bajoran personnel such as Odo and Mora Pol. At the same time Bajorans have access to important skills they are short of (such as Astrophysics and Engineer), Romulan speed and powerful ships. I predict this to be a lethal combination in the future.

Finally the most recent expansion, Mirror Mirror, is at time of writing largely untested and is bound to affect the metagame just as much as any expansion. The new Romulan AU personnel instantly catch the eye. AU dropping on a large scale now becomes a serious possibility especially using the Battle Cruiser which, like the Gal'Gathong, downloads an original series personnel. A few of the new missions also seem well suited to Romulans, specifically 'Feldomite Rush', given the large number of AMS points available. We will just have to see if the Romulans remain a dominant force in months to come.

### Playing with Romulans

Before I move on to specific Romulan decks I would like to take a few paragraphs to give some general pointers on playing with Romulans. As with any affiliation, the key is to successfully harness their inherent strengths. There are certain deck types that are specifically built around Romulans and others that work better with them than with any



other affiliation. However the London players adage of 'use Romulans and everything will be okay' is unfortunately not true. There is little point trying to build a Romulan Q-bypass deck, for example, as nearly every other affiliation does it so much better. The following covers some general points to bear in mind when playing any Romulan deck.

The oldest advantage enjoyed by Romulans, which to an extent still remains today, is their mission selection. Not only do they have tight mission sets for both space and planet missions, but those missions tend to be worth a lot of points. In space, the 'Loca-R'Mor' set of missions still remains very useful (see Space Speed deck below), while on planets, the Treachery/Archaeology set is very tight. They do of course have a third set of missions in the form of multiple PNZs. Decks using 4, 5 or even 6 PNZs are quite common. Most good Romulan decks use one of these 3 mission sets. What they also have are good support missions to use alongside these sets. The best of these are Quash Conspiracy and Covert Installation. Quash is a 40 point space mission that can be completed by any Tal Shiar person on their own. Used to be a regular fixture in Loca-R'Mor decks before some nasty combos involving Lack of Preparation became possible. With the decline of Lack of Preparation, Quash has once again become a great mission. Covert Installation is a 35-point planet mission that Sirol and Lore (both found in most Romulan decks) can complete on their own. It also has the added bonus of being in the neutral zone, so it can be used to supplement your PNZ missions or land a ship there to ruin your opponent's all space PNZ deck. Other good support missions include Intercept Renegade and Excavation.

When it come to choosing personnel, sometimes it is better to choose personnel to match your missions and sometimes it's better to chose missions to match your personnel. In general, if you are playing a straightforward mission solver do the former and if you are playing a trick deck (especially one that requires certain personnel) do the latter. There are some Romulan personnel, however, who tend to go in any deck regardless of mission set because of their classification(s) or dilemma busting skills. The following people should be considered for any Romulan deck.

Selveth: Double Navigation and Stellar Cartography (for Navigational Hazards and Stellar Flare) and Geology for Odo's cousin. She also has the rare (for Romulans) classification of Engineer.

Dr Telak R'Mor: His double Astrophysics and Stellar Cartography make him a must for space decks but his Science/Engineer combination make him useful in any deck.

Koval: A double Tal Shiar that can be downloaded with 'Defend Homeworld' is useful in many circumstances. His Exobiology and Treachery are useful skills for mission solving and dilemma busting.

Sirol: A fantastic mission solver in space and on planets. Has all the requirements for 'Covert Installation' and all requirements bar the integrity for 'Pegasus Search'. Also helps to get past Maglock in space decks and has his own ship to captain. One of the few useful Romulan Diplomacy personnel.

Lore: Not Romulan but might as well be. Best stats in the game (given the popularity of 'In the Pale Moonlight') a good mix of skills and also has Security and Engineer. Plays for free to any Cybernetics. If you have him and don't put him in your Romulan deck (unless using Soong) you are mad.

It is important to utilise these personnel if you are building a mission solver. If you had just these personnel in an away team along with mission specialists Mopak and Takket, you would have Officer, Science, Medical, Security (3), Engineer (4), VIP, Civilian, Exobiology (2), Geology, Biology, Treachery (4), Navigation (3), Stellar Cartography (2), Computer Skill and much more. With these skills, you could get past (amongst others) Berserk Changeling, Odo's Cousin, In the Pale Moonlight, Q Gets the Point, Ferengi Infestation, Navigational Hazards and Stellar Flare. It doesn't take much imagination to realise that this makes Romulans probably the most robust mission solvers in the game.

Of course, the alternative to using these 'super personnel' is to use the plethora of personnel available to the Romulans that play for free. These include all those who report for free to 'Continuing Committee' and 'Office of the Proconsul' and those that can be downloaded with ease using 'Going to the Top'. These personnel provide you with a less attractive skill and classification selection but the bonus of being able to get them out much faster. If speed is of the essence, you are scanning or your missions are easy to complete (for example PNZ) this may be a better choice. In reality, a combination of both groups of personnel may be necessary.

When building your deck and when playing, it's important to remember that Romulans can battle. Not only does this mean attack decks are possible (more on how to build them below) but incidental battle during a game can swing the course of the game. Standard D'deridexs are weapons 9 and Cretak, who is a good personnel in her own right, will increase all of your ships' weapons by two. One good combo that can be put into any Romulan deck without any wasted cards is to download 'Engage Cloak' with Keras and then cloak a Warbird with Cretak on board while you get out the rest of your personnel. If your opponent ever gets stopped on a ship, de-cloak and shoot him. With tactics you can easily get to 14 attack with no further cards. If the matching commander is aboard you can even use Make it so to unstop the ship and finish them off. This whole combo has cost you 1 seed card, 1 ship (which would be in your deck anyway), 2 personnel (probably likewise) and a download from the tent. Not bad for potentially blowing up a ship full of people. Other excellent combos are also possible. Download a D'deridex using 'Spacedoor', then use 'Assign Support Personnel' to get Tomalak. Guaranteed ship with its matching commander on turn 1. Alternatively, 'Hidden Fighter' for the Apnex and a Romulan shuttle, 'Going to the Top' for Senator Vreenak and Ready Room Door for Mirok. 2 captained ships without using your card play. Any or all of these combos can be used very cheaply and may win you the odd game here or there. At the very least, it should make your opponent think twice before going near your outpost again.

However, before I end this section and start discussing specific decks, a short section on the weaknesses of Romulan decks (yes there are some). When it comes to tournament decks, the biggest problem is that they have no in built drawing engine. While Cardassians and Bajorans have Nors and Ferengi and Federation have cargo running, Romulans have no unique drawing mechanism. All the free card plays in the world are no good if you can't get them to your hand so a lot of your card plays are often spent on Kivas Fajos or The Traveller. The only other option is to try a more daring drawing mechanism such as Rascals/Ooby Dooby, or devote seed and deck space to the Guardian of Forever. Another thing to watch out for when playing space missions is the possibility of your opponent stealing them. 'Study Lonka Pulsar', 'Investigate Shattered Space' and 'Quash Conspiracy' cannot be defended by 'HQ: Defensive Measures' or 'Fair Play'. PNZ is another big worry because it can be stolen by the Federation as well. Although this can be defended against with Defensive measures, the prospect of a first turn win for your opponent is such a tempting prospect that he may have an espionage card in the deck. Personnel wise they have very few weaknesses although they do have a shortage of Diplomacy personnel and (although this situation has improved), they are badly hurt by 'Firestorm'.

### Romulan Decks

#### Patrol Neutral Zone:

Despite attempts to counter this, PNZ has been going strong for the best part of 3 years, although it has evolved a lot in this time. Use between 2 and 6 PNZ's (you only plan on completing 2 and make up the other missions with other neutral zone locations or possibly 1 non-neutral zone location if you are afraid of 'Wake of the Borg'. Your missions specialists will usually be Tallus (Leadership) and one other (Parem, Takket and Mopak are popular choices). When building PNZ decks you have 2 issues to really contend with. Firstly how will you get your opponent's ships out of the neutral zone and secondly how will you complete the missions. A good illustration of both of these points is Eric Johnfauno's World Championship 2000 winning deck. He used a combination of 'Isabella', 'Temporal Rift' and Devidian Door/Commandeer ship to get ships out of the NZ and Senior Staff Meeting (the requirements being available first turn) to lessen the number of Dilemmas he had to face. The other big way of removing ships from the neutral zone is to battle. Because of 'Defend Homeworld' dedicated battle decks are far less popular then they were but a battle deck whose purpose is getting ships out of the neutral zone is still deadly given the number of tricks to get a lot of weapons out quickly (see examples earlier). As for Dilemma busting, I think the best way is to throw every thing you have at a mission and then solve with what's left. Only one person is needed to do the mission so it does not matter if you lose a few people along the way. Try to include personnel that you can get out quickly and easily such as Senators and mission specialists. I would advise against the HQ as this knocks 10 points off your missions and you will spend most of the game ferrying your people around.

### Space Speed:

These decks are based around the 'Loca-R'Mor missions', in other words 'Investigate Shattered Space', 'Study Lonka Pulsar' and 'Explore Typhone Expanse'. 'Quash Conspiracy' is also often used. The general idea of these decks is to complete 2 of the aforementioned missions for the win. This means that you will need another way of getting points other than the points from the mission. Fortunately many mission specialists are available to meet the mission requirements and the best way is ideally to score Shattered Space for 55 using Tallus (Leadership) and Tarus (Stellar Cartography) and Lonka Pulsar for the other 45 using Tarus. If you are afraid of 'The Big Picture' you may wish to instead complete 'Covert Installation' for 45 or use another planet mission and score the remaining points by a self seeded 'Barclay's Protomorphosis Disease' or a 'Phoenix', at a headquarters. In its pure form, this deck is all about speed and can work similarly to a PNZ deck. It can also be combined with a stall deck, which means you can take your time solving the missions. The key personnel in this deck is Dr. Telek R'Mor, who has many of the requirements for your 2 key missions. Other useful people include the mission specialists mentioned and Sirol and Selveth who are good for dilemma busting and providing Navigation for Lonka Pulsar.

### STA Deck:

The Romulan planet STA deck is probably the most powerful of the Soong Type Android decks. Mission choice is pretty much up to you although the homeworld is usually used for some extra free card plays (although I wouldn't bother with 'Office of the Proconsul' because of the limited personnel it allows). If you download Telak with 'Defend Homeworld' you can play Soong Type Androids for free meaning you can either play with fewer Dr. Soongs or eliminate him altogether and use Lore, who would otherwise give you nemesis icon problems. However, on balance I would suggest using at least one Dr. Soong and not Lore, whose skills can be replaced with those on played for free personnel. This gives the added advantage in that you can reprogram your androids at will. If you are doing this then you may want to consider using 'Genetronic Replicator' and making about 4 of your androids medical to start with. The biggest problem with this deck tends to be getting everything into your hand so you will probably want to use a lot of Kivas Fajos (possibly as much as 20% of your deck). As a result you want to eliminate from your deck anything that can't be played immediately (for example, 'Hidden Fighter' and 'Going to the Top' can but 'Kevin Uxbridge' and 'Wormhole' can't). Otherwise a player using Scorched Hand could slow you down immensely.

### Report for Free Deck:

This is very similar to the STA deck and indeed may incorporate a STA element. The important thing with this deck is to use no card plays for any personnel or (if possible) ships. Free personnel are obtained through the dual headquarters, Going to the Top and

other freebies such as 'Assign Support Personnel' and 'Defend Homeworld'. A limited amount of 'Soong Type Androids' may also be used but it is better to stick with Telak rather than use a card play on Dr Soong. This frees all your card plays for speed cards and, if required, stall tactics for your opponent. Because your personnel selection will be restricted, it may be wise to put some good dilemma busting personnel in the tent such as Dathon, Selveth and The Albino in case you need them. Ships will normally be downloaded with 'Hidden Fighter' but remember to stock at least one ship with a tractor beam given the number of 'Radioactive Garbage Scows' currently in use. Rather than the usual Kivas/Traveller combination for cards, you may want to consider the possibility of cargo running. However this tends to rely on commandeering Empok Nor for equipment, so you will need to consider how to overcome Ferengi Infestation.

#### GTTT, Ooby Dooby:

This is basically similar to the report for free deck except it's more complicated and more risky but ultimately faster. For those unfamiliar with the Ooby Dooby card drawing engine, it revolves around hitting your own 'Ooby Dooby' dilemmas with only Youth Personnel present to draw a large amount of cards. Because of their lack of youth, Romulans will proceed the 'Ooby Dooby' with a 'Rascals' to get the required youth. The cards drawn through Ooby Dooby contain a large amount of 'Going to the Tops' which are then played immediately for free personnel (and the ability to draw even more cards). This can be done with or without a Federation Treaty but if you chose to do it with, don't seed it but instead use your first GTTT for Senator Vreenak who then downloads it. You will find that you are missing vital skills and classifications with the downloaded personnel, but they can be supplemented by an AU drop with the Gal Gath'thong. Using this you can drop Telek R'Mor, Keras. The Centurion and any other AU people you think will be useful and download another. In my World Championship 2000 version of this deck I also dropped Dr. McCoy to cure Rascals. An excellent trick with this deck is to Spacedoor for a D'deridex turn 1 and then 'Assign Support Personnel' for Tomalak. You can then use 'Make It So' to unstop your ship after the first Ooby Dooby. You may also include 'Distortion of the Space/Time Continuum' for this purpose although bear in mind that your opponent can download 'Temporal Vortex' with 'Q the Referee'. Mission set is entirely up to you. You may wish to consider PNZ because of the speed of this deck (you can get out about 15 people on turn 1). On the whole, space missions are better if you are using the AU drop because of the considerable amount of Astrophysics and Stellar Cartography available on the AU personnel.

#### Shuttle Armada:

This is the most viable of the Romulan Armadas and since Obelisk of Masaka possibly the most viable armada available. The idea is to use ships downloaded with 'Hidden Fighter' and their matching commanders. ('Cha'joh' with 'Sisters of Duras', 'Apnex' with 'Mirok' and 'Romulan Shuttle' with Senator Vreenak. You can also use a D'deridex with Tomalak (using 'Spacedoor' and 'Assign Support Personnel'). This, with 'Captains

Log' and tactics will give you more than enough weapons to blow up a ship or outpost. If extra weapon are needed for a HQ or beefed up outpost, Senator Cretak or Bynars Weapon Enhancements can be used. This deck is perfect to use PNZ with as it gives you a great way of getting your opponent's ships out of the neutral zone and you already have the mission requirements. It is necessary to include the neutral zone planets for 'Hidden Fighter' but if you use both of these and 'Investigate Shattered Space' you can get to 100 points even if they land a ship. Remember to include personnel such as Selveth and Sirol for getting past space walls, though. Again, you have a problem here with getting all the cards into your hand but for once, the Romulans have a handy drawing mechanism to overcome this. Use the following routine at the start.

Seed Phase: Seed your Romulan Outpost at a Neutral Zone planet, Empok Nor next door at a PNZ and the neutral outpost on the other side of it. Put your Spacedoor at the Neutral Outpost and your mission specialists at the Romulan Outpost

1<sup>st</sup> Turn: Download 'Karemman Vessel' with the Spacedoor. Use 'Ready Room Door' to download Hanok to the ship and download '34<sup>th</sup> Rule of Acquisition' to Hanok. Use a 'Hidden Fighter' to get a Romulan shuttle to your Romulan Outpost, then use 'Going to the Top' for Senator Vreenak (or wait until next turn and use 'Ready Room Door' to get him to the Romulan Shuttle. Download a Romulan/Dominion treaty with Senator Vreenak and then put all the Romulans on the Romulan Shuttle. Move the Romulan Shuttle and the Karemman Vessel to Empok Nor and beam Tallus to the latter.

You can then attack Empok Nor with the Karemman vessel every turn, drawing 2 cards in the process. This means that every turn you should be able to 'Hidden Fighter' for a ship and use 'Ready Room Door' to download its captain. You can use your card plays for additional personnel or Kivas Fajos if you run out of steam.

Steal, MD and Tripping decks:

All of these are different decks in their own right but they have in common the fact that they require attempting your opponent's missions. A steal deck is where you plan on stealing your opponents' missions, a mission denial deck is where you manipulate your opponents' missions so they can't complete them and a tripping deck is where you 'trip' nasty dilemmas at their missions. For all these decks the primary thing you need to worry about is how you are going to attempt the missions. You really have 2 options. The first is to use espionage cards. It is best to do this using 'Plans of the Tal Shiar' as this gives you recycling and downloading opportunities. You will need a Tal Shiar personnel early and you can do this by either 'Defend Homeworld' for Telak or Koval or 'Going to the Top' for Senator Vreenak. The other method is to attempt missions via a treaty. The disadvantage of this is that you will be prevented by 'HQ: Defensive Measures' but the advantages are that you have a treaty with every affiliation (except Ferengi) and you can easily get any treaty you want by stocking them all and then use 'Going to the Top' for Senator Vreenak. Thief decks are rarely used these days because of 'Fair Play'. Unless you want to risk clearing your opponents' missions for them, you will need to target

either universal missions or those worth over 35 points. It is best to use either AMS personnel or an early commander of Empok Nor as you will need access to the required skills quickly. Tripping decks and mission denial decks are similar to each other as both revolve around encountering dilemmas at your opponents' missions without actually completing them. Tripping decks are most common, using Dal'roks and Sheliaks to kill opposing personnel and destroy outposts respectively. Rape decks are more subtle. A common dilemma combo under a mission in this deck would be DNA Clues + Hippocratic Oath + Scientific Method. If the 'DNA Clues' is tripped, what is left is effectively a wall requiring 6 Medical and 3 Science to get past. For tripping and mission denial decks, a favourite method is keeping a Computer Skill x2 personnel from each affiliation in your tent, then downloading the correct personnel to hand turn one with 'Quark's Isolinear Rods'. You can then use 'Devidian Door' to report that personnel to your opponent's planet mission and attempt.

Hero of the Empire:

Although initially designed to be a Klingon deck, Romulans can do this deck just as efficiently, if not more so because of their superior tripping abilities. Your primary concern is how to get your Barry Waddle to Station K7. The best method found so far is to download a 'Temporal Vortex' to your outpost at Sherman's Planet using 'Q the Referee' and simply fly him to the past. Where the tripping comes in is that once you have disrupted the timeline, you can trip, drag and destroy 'Radioactive Garbage Scows' to reduce the point value of the missions even further. Once you have done this, there is very little your opponent can do to win so you can take your time scoring 100 points using any method you want. You may want to combine this with a theft deck so that you can steal any high point missions that might allow your opponent to win.

I hope this has provided you with an adequate guide to playing with my favourite affiliation. Of course, to get more info on specific decks see the appropriate chapter of this guide but I wish to just leave you with one quote from the files of the London tournament scene much liked by Ambassador Ringo Greenwich.

'The only thing that can beat a good Romulan deck is a better Romulan deck.'

## **Affiliation Overview: Borg**

### **Relentless Pursuit of Perfection: The Borg Affiliation**

By Chris Heard

The cybernetic, imperturbable Borg were the first new affiliation to be added to the Star Trek Customizable Card Game after the release of the Premiere set. The First Contact expansion, based on the feature film of the same name, focused heavily on this new affiliation, as did the Enhanced First Contact boutique product. Since then, the Borg

affiliation has not grown in card pool and flexibility as fast as some of the affiliations featured more prominently on Star Trek: Deep Space Nine. Nevertheless, the Borg affiliation remains a popular and viable affiliation for great play.

#### A. Conceptualizing Borg Gameplay

To successfully play Borg, one must think the game somewhat differently. The Borg do not attempt missions, and they do not accomplish their goals primarily through the use of skills. Rather, they score points primarily by completing objectives bearing a "Borg only" icon. The outcomes of those objectives usually depend on probe results. Virtually all of a Borg deck's actions are governed by its objectives. To take actions most decks take for granted--such as beaming to and from planets and attacking opposing forces--the Borg must have explicit permission from an objective card.

The primary space-oriented Borg-only point-scoring objectives are Establish Gateway and Salvage Starship. Establish Gateway targets any space mission. The game text of Salvage Starship allows it to target Wolf 359 (the Secret Salvage mission) or any space mission with a point box where an opponent's ship was destroyed. The special game text of the Investigate Incursion mission allows that mission to be targeted by Salvage Starship. Once a space mission is targeted by one of these objectives, the Borg may "scout" that location. Scouting a space location proceeds in a manner similar to attempting a space mission. Dilemmas are revealed, encountered by the ship's crew, and resolved one by one. When all of the dilemmas have been cleared away, scouting is complete.

The primary planet-oriented Borg-only point-scoring objectives are Assimilate Homeworld and Assimilate Planet. As the name implies, Assimilate Homeworld targets a homeworld; it also requires a "counterpart" matching the affiliation native to that homeworld (for more on counterparts, see below). Assimilate Planet targets any non-homeworld planet mission whose point box shows at least 35 points. Borg scouting of a planet location is similar to attempting a planet mission, in that dilemmas are revealed, encountered by the Away Team, and resolved one by one. What makes planet scouting unique is that Borg drones normally scout planet missions one drone at a time. A single drone is sent to scout the planet and encounter resistance (dilemmas). If that drone is killed or stopped, another drone may beam down to take its place, and so on until all dilemmas have been cleared away. Then scouting is complete.

Completion of scouting, however, is not like completion of a mission. The objective has not been completed, and the points have not been scored, until a successful probe has taken place. Probing involves revealing the top card of the draw deck and examining it for the presence of certain icons as listed in the probe results list. For example, when probing for success on Establish Gateway, one flips the top card of the draw deck and examines it for the presence of a communications (blue) or navigation (green) subcommand icon. If any such icon is present on the card, the objective is successful; then the points are scored and other results may ensue. The biggest "catch" to probing is that, by rule, you may not probe for success on the same turn when you complete



scouting. Nor may you probe for success if you battled at the location targeted by your current objective on your current turn or on your opponent's immediately preceding turn.

The other chief Borg-only point-scoring objective, Assimilate Counterpart, does not target a spaceline location. Instead, it targets an opponent's unique male personnel (as Picard was targeted in *The Next Generation*, and Data was targeted in *First Contact*). Instead of scouting, the target of Assimilate Counterpart is acquired through personnel battle; the Borg who engages the target in battle may abduct him. The target must then be moved to an Assimilation Table, after which probing may occur. If successful, the target is assimilated as a counterpart. This gives the Borg player points (5 points per skill dot on the counterpart's card) and other advantages as well, such as the ability to assimilate the homeworld matching the counterpart's native affiliation.

## B. Borg Assets

### 1. Personnel

Borg personnel are somewhat different from other personnel in several interesting respects. Most of the Borg personnel are universal drones, although there are a small number of unique drones (e.g., *Seven of Nine* and *Third of Five*). Borg drones are identified by their designations, such as "Eight of Nineteen," but also by narrative identifications in their lore boxes, such as "Assault Drone." Because it can be confusing to remember all the numbers, drones are usually called by their identifications rather than their designations. Each Borg drone also has a "biological distinctiveness" identifying (more or less precisely) its species of origin. Borg personnel have no staffing icons of the traditional sort. Instead, they have subcommand icons: blue for communication, green for navigation, and red for defense. Another unique feature of Borg drones is that almost all of them have some sort of special skill; the Borg have no mission specialists or support personnel.

The central mind driving the Borg collective is personified in the Borg Queen. The Borg Queen was the first personnel card to bear the enigma icon next to her name. An enigma personnel is not a unique personnel, but each player may have only one copy in play at any given time. The Queen bears all three subcommand icons.

As established in *First Contact*, the Borg Queen--at least the one played by Alice Krige--sought a "counterpart" to assist in the assimilation of the Federation. Originally she set her sights on Jean-Luc Picard, then on Data. The Assimilate Counterpart objective has already been mentioned above, but depending on one's opponent to provide the specific affiliation(s) one needs to assimilate the homeworld(s) one wishes to target is chancy. Enter the pre-assimilated counterparts. *Locutus of Borg*, introduced in *The Fajo Collection*, was the first pre-assimilated counterpart (and he was actually available before any other Borg card). Thanks to *Locutus*, a Borg player does not have to complete Assimilate Counterpart on a Federation personnel before being able to target Earth with Assimilate Homeworld. Enhanced *First Contact* added pre-assimilated counterparts from the Bajoran (*Bareil*), Cardassian (*Dukat*), Klingon (*Gowron*), and Romulan (*Tomalak*)

species, while Mirror, Mirror added a pre-assimilated Vorta counterpart (Weyoun). These counterparts other than Locutus never appeared in any Star Trek series or film; they are extrapolated from the Next Generation episode "Parallels," in which the Borg were seen to have overrun the Alpha Quadrant in certain alternate timelines. Counterparts typically have skills that the standard Borg drones lack, such as Leadership, Diplomacy, Honor, Treachery, OFFICER, and V.I.P. They also bear all three subcommand icons. One's collective, however, may have only one counterpart in play at a time.

## 2. Ships

Borg cubes are the most fearsome ships in the Star Trek CCG. Each Borg cube--the universal model as well as the unique cubes commanded by the Borg Queen and Locutus, respectively--sports WEAPONS and SHIELDS of 24 each. Cube's RANGEs range from 8 to 10, depending on the precise model. And Borg ship attributes are terribly easy to enhance, because so many Borg personnel have positive effects thereupon. Each Tactical Drone adds 2 to its cube's WEAPONS; each Guard Drone adds 2 to its cube's SHIELDS; and each Astrogation Drone adds 1 to its cube's RANGE. A Multiplexor Drone even allows a single cube to train its massive weapons on multiple targets during a single battle. The down side to the collective's great power, however, is its singlemindedness. The Borg cannot initiate an attack without permission (or compulsion) from an objective or some other card, although they may counter-attack if attacked first.

The collective's mid-range ships, the universal Borg Sphere and the Queen's Borg Sphere, feature mediocre attributes. The universal Sphere's native RANGE of 4 is quite inadequate if it is not being carried along the spaceline by a cube; the extra point of RANGE on the Queen's Borg Sphere does not really alleviate this problem. One of the Enhanced First Contact premium cards, Sphere Encounter, boosts the RANGE of each sphere by 4, thus overcoming this limitation. WEAPONS and SHIELDS of 6, however, are still risky.

The weakest of Borg ships is the Borg Scout Vessel. Its WEAPONS and SHIELDS of 4 are hardly more intimidating than an Yridian Shuttle. Yet the Borg Scout Vessel has the great advantage of reporting with crew--any number of personnel, as long as at least one has a navigation subcommand icon--to the end of any spaceline (and it brings a Transwarp Network Gateway along with it; see below for more information on transwarp movement).

All Borg ships have one major drawback: a built-in bounty. On analogy with the Borg Ship dilemma, each Borg-affiliation ship bears a point box. Destroying a Borg Ship dilemma is worth 45 points to the destroyer; so is destroying a universal Borg Cube. The unique Borg cubes are worth 50 points each. Spheres and Scout Vessels also carry bounties, although somewhat smaller. Lone Borg Spheres and Borg Scout Vessels are thus tempting targets for other affiliations. And the Borg are the only affiliation that the Federation can attack at will, by rule. Borg players thus need to be prepared for aggressive resistance from opponents seeking easy points from the destruction of small craft.

Like Borg personnel, Borg ships have no command or staff stars as staffing icons. Instead, their staffing requirements are expressed in subcommand icons or generic Borg affiliation icons. Borg Cubes are mighty ships, but they are tough to staff, requiring seven different subcommand icons. As with other affiliations, each Borg personnel may satisfy only of those staffing icons, with the sole exception of Seven of Nine, who has a special skill allowing her to contribute all three of her subcommand icons to staffing.

### 3. Equipment

The Borg typically do not use equipment. The chief exception is the Assimilation Table, which is used mainly for assimilating counterparts. The Procurement Drone may "steal" an opponent's unattended equipment cards, but since Borg personnel have no classifications and are Borg affiliation, many such cards will prove less than useful to the Borg.

### 4. Events, Interrupts, and Incidents

Several events, interrupts, and incidents are available only to the Borg, or benefit the Borg in unique ways.

The most important Borg-only events are Activate Subcommands and We Are the Borg. Activate Subcommands downloads one drone of each subcommand (communication, navigation, and defense), but by playing it one forfeits the card draw for that turn. We Are the Borg has two useful functions. It can be used to download two defense drones, without forfeiting a card draw. Alternately, when played on the table, it allows the Borg player to play one Borg-affiliated card for free or take an additional end-of-turn card draw.

Among interrupts, Awaken and Adapt: Negate Obstruction are staples in most Borg decks. Awaken downloads one communication or navigation drone, unless played at the beginning of a battle, when it downloads one defense drone (two if your opponent initiated that battle). Some Borg decks are up to 50% Awakens. Adapt: Negate Obstruction is similarly a must-have card for most Borg decks, since its ability to nullify any non-Q-related dilemma offers the Borg a way around "wall" dilemmas they might otherwise have a terribly difficult time passing.

The incident card type was introduced in the Enhanced First Contact boutique product. Although not all incidents are Borg-related, several give the Borg considerably more flexibility. Probably the most popular Borg-only incident is Service the Collective, which eliminates the typical Borg probe delay if you have an appropriate counterpart at the mission you have scouted. Enhanced First Contact also introduced Add Distinctiveness, an incident that allows Borg players to score bonus points by assimilating opposing personnel. Resistance Is Futile is another very popular incident with three functions. One function allows you to report your navigation drones directly to Borg Spheres. Another allows you to ignore the extra point requirements of an opponent's Q's Planet if you have

a communication drone at the location of Q's Planet. The other function of Resistance Is Futile adds 10 points to the value of certain completed objectives if you have a defense drone at the location where the relevant objective was completed. Note that since Resistance Is Futile has all three subcommand icons in its game text, it makes an excellent probe card as well.

This examination of Borg assets has been only introductory, not exhaustive. It should, however, serve to give you the flavor of the affiliation.

### C. The Borg and Dilemmas

When it comes to dilemma resolution, however, the Borg are really not very different from other affiliations, except for three unique features of the Borg.

#### 1. Gender Is Irrelevant

Whenever your Borg encounter a dilemma whose effects are gender-determined, discard that dilemma immediately and continue scouting. (Also, your Borg are invalid targets for any card whose effects are gender-determined [e.g., Canar].) Anaphasic Organism, Brief Romance, Female's Love Interest, Kidnapper, Male's Love Interest, Matriarchal Society, and Parallel Romance are gender-related dilemmas.

#### 2. Bonus Points Are Irrelevant Unless Otherwise Specified

The point boxes on most dilemmas are irrelevant to your Borg, but the game text on cards bearing point boxes is not (unless the game text is concerned solely with bonus points, as is the case with The Higher ... the Fewer). When your Borg encounter a dilemma that has a bonus point box, play out the dilemma as normal. However, if your Borg overcome the dilemma, you gain no bonus points and you place the card into the owner's discard pile instead of your bonus point area. If the card presents a choice, you must choose an option that is not point-related, if possible (however, very few dilemmas actually present a choice; see specific entries below). A few cards, including the dilemma Balancing Act, are exceptions to this general rule and do manipulate Borg players' point totals; each such card bears a [BO] icon or a notice like "even if playing Borg." (Please note that there is a popular misconception that the Borg cannot score bonus points, whether positive or negative. This is not true. The Borg can score bonus points from cards that say the Borg can score bonus points. Any card other than a [BO] objective that grants points to or takes points away from the Borg--e.g., Balancing Act, Add Distinctiveness--is a bonus point situation.)

#### 3. Borg Do Not Attempt Missions

Since the Borg do not attempt missions, they are not prevented from scouting by dilemmas that block mission attempts. However, if any such dilemma has conditions, your Borg who encounter that dilemma will probably be "stopped" if they fail to overcome those conditions. Dead End, Edo Probe, and Radioactive Garbage Scow

require application of this principle. For example, when first encountered, Dead End stops a Borg scouting attempt if the Borg player does not have 50 points. Once placed on the mission, however, Dead End relates to mission attempts, not scouting attempts, and therefore has no effect on the Borg thereafter. Edo Probe and Radioactive Garbage Scow are basically irrelevant to the Borg, since they relate to mission attempts, not scouting.

#### D. The Transwarp Network

When the First Contact expansion introduced the Borg affiliation into the Star Trek Customizable Card Game, it also introduced a new method of movement: the transwarp network. This network is used by the Borg for movement, not least movement from their Delta Quadrant outpost to one of the standard spacelines. Construction and use of the transwarp network, however, can prove confusing, especially because the Transwarp Network Gateway card has two distinct but related uses.

##### 1. Creating the Transwarp Network

If you are playing Borg and you plan to report your Borg ships and personnel to the Borg Outpost, you will very likely want to use Transwarp Network Gateways to get your Borg to the spaceline from the outpost and, if necessary, to the outpost from the spaceline. (Your other, more difficult alternative is to use two Wormholes to move your Borg ships from and to your outpost.)

You are allowed to seed one Transwarp Network Gateway at one end of the spaceline. Note that a Transwarp Network Gateway is not a location of its own; it resides at an existing spaceline location. That location may be either a planet location or a space location.

Your Borg Outpost enables you to make a "special download" of a Transwarp Network Gateway. This means that once per game you may download a Transwarp Network Gateway to your Borg Outpost (which is considered a location). When you use a special download you must immediately put the downloaded card into play. This does not count as your regular card play for your turn, but you must obey all the conditions or prerequisites for playing the card. A Transwarp Network Gateway may only be played where a navigation Borg is present, so you must have such a Borg at your outpost before you may use the outpost's special download ability. Under the interim Borg Outpost rules (which should be made obsolete when the Voyager expansion introduces Delta Quadrant spaceline locations), this is the only way for you to construct a Transwarp Network Gateway at your Borg Outpost, since the Borg Outpost is not on the spaceline and Transwarp Network Gateways normally play on the spaceline.

Later in the game, if you have a Transwarp Network Gateway in your hand, you may play it at any spaceline location where you have a navigation Borg. This does not count as your normal card play. Playing a Transwarp Network Gateway in this fashion is irrelevant to the Establish Gateway objective (see below), but does create another point of access to the entire transwarp network.

## 2. Navigating the Transwarp Network

Once you have a transwarp network (consisting of at least two Transwarp Network Gateways) in play, you are ready to begin moving your ships through the network. Please note that, once on the spaceline, your Borg ships may use normal ranged movement or transwarp network movement, at your discretion and subject to the requirements of transwarp movement.

If you have one or more Borg ships at the same location as a Transwarp Network Gateway, you may move any or all of those ships to one other location with a Transwarp Network Gateway by playing (from your hand to your discard pile) one Transwarp Network Gateway card or one Transwarp Conduit card. Playing either card in this fashion does not count as your regular card play (because one is a doorway and one is an interrupt). (You may also use Transwarp Conduit cards according to their card texts, but of course you may not get both uses out of the same card in a single card play.) Transwarp movement is never a "free ride"; you must always play a card as the "toll" for using transwarp movement. Transwarp movement does not expend any of your ships' RANGE, but you must of course be able to fully staff your ship before you may move it.

If you have in your hand a Borg Scout Vessel and a navigation Borg, you may report that ship with that Borg (plus any additional Borg you wish) to a Transwarp Network Gateway at any spaceline end. If the spaceline end you select does not have a Transwarp Network Gateway, you are required (by the text on the Borg Scout Vessel card) to download a Transwarp Network Gateway. If neither end of the spaceline has an open Transwarp Network Gateway and you are unable to download one, you may not report the Borg Scout Vessel in this fashion. Also, under these circumstances your opponent is entitled to look through your hand, draw deck, Q's Tent side deck (if any, unless closed), and Zalkonian Capsule card pile (if any) to verify that you had no Transwarp Network Gateways in any of these. If your opponent exercises this option and examines your draw deck, you must reshuffle it thereafter.

## 3. The Establish Gateway Objective

All of the foregoing considerations are irrelevant to completion of the Establish Gateway objective (although they may influence which mission you target with your objective). See the First Contact Rules Supplement and the text of Establish Gateway for details on that objective's targeting, scouting, and probing requirements. The relevant consideration here is that, upon completion of the objective, you must download to that location one Transwarp Network Gateway, if possible (even if there is already a Transwarp Network Gateway at that location). If you are unable to download a Transwarp Network Gateway upon successfully probing for completion of Establish Gateway, you still score 25 points for the objective. However, in this instance your opponent is entitled to look through your hand, draw deck, Q's Tent side deck (if any, unless closed), and Zalkonian Capsule card pile (if any) to verify that you had no Transwarp Network Gateways in any of these. If

your opponent exercises this option and examines your draw deck, you must reshuffle it thereafter.

#### 4. Deck Building Tips

If you are going to use a transwarp network for moving your Borg around, it is imperative that you include a sufficient number of the appropriate cards.

At a minimum, you will need to include one to be seeded at (or downloaded to) one end of the spaceline, one to be downloaded to your Borg Outpost (if you are using the outpost), and one for each Establish Gateway objective you intend to pursue (unless you are willing for your opponent to examine your draw deck, Q's Tent side deck, and Zalkonian Capsule card pile). These Transwarp Network Gateways will be used to create the transwarp network.

In order to use the network to move around, you will also need to include a few Transwarp Network Gateways or Transwarp Conduits. If your only goal for this card is to get your Borg from the outpost to the spaceline, you will need only one of these. You may, however, wish to include additional Transwarp Network Gateways or Transwarp Conduits if you anticipate needing to return to your Borg Outpost from the Alpha Quadrant. Moreover, if you wish to move between Transwarp Network Gateways on the spaceline, you will need to stock additional Transwarp Network Gateways or Transwarp Conduits (or plan on retrieving them with Palor Toff or Res-Q, accepting all the risks attendant to that strategy). Consider using Transwarp Conduits instead of Transwarp Network Gateways for this "toll payment" purpose, since the Transwarp Conduits also have a useful function unrelated to the use of the transwarp network. Note too that the Transwarp Drone (Two of Nineteen) allows you to download either Transwarp Network Gateway or Transwarp Conduit (or any future doorway or interrupt with "Transwarp" in its name) in place of one card draw.

#### E. The Borg and Battle

The Borg are constrained by very particular battle rules that are not immediately obvious, and may perhaps be counter-intuitive, to some players attracted to the Borg. The key to understanding the battle aspect of a Borg deck lies in the very simple but easily overlooked distinction between can and may. In other words, you must distinguish carefully between ability and authorization (or capability and permission) if you want to grasp the Borg affiliation's battle capabilities--and disabilities.

##### 1. Attack Capabilities

In terms of attack capabilities, the Borg are certainly a force with which to be reckoned.

*Starship Battles.* Borg Cubes are, with their WEAPONS and SHIELDS of 24 each, the most formidable ships available. Unenhanced, a Borg Cube can take out most ships with a single shot. Beyond this, it is fairly easy to enhance a Borg ship's armaments. Borg

ships get full benefits from standard WEAPONS and SHIELDS enhancements such as Bynars Weapon Enhancement, Metaphasic Shields, Nutational Shields, Plasmadyne Relay, and so on (and if you can get out the Queen's Borg Cube or Locutus' Borg Cube with the matching commander aboard, the ship benefits from Captain's Log, Defiant Dedication Plaque, and so on). Even better, the very drones required to staff the huge ship can provide it with added benefits. Each Eighteen of Nineteen (Astrogation Drone) aboard provides RANGE +1, each Four of Eleven (Guard Drone) aboard provides SHIELDS +2, and each Thirteen of Nineteen (Tactical Drone) provides WEAPONS +2. Moreover, Nine of Seventeen (Multiplexor Drone) allows a single Borg ship to use its full WEAPONS against multiple targets in the same attack. If Four of Eleven, Thirteen of Nineteen, or Nine of Seventeen are lacking on the ship at the start of the battle, the Awaken interrupt allows them to be downloaded to the ship before the battle is resolved (one per Awaken played, unless the battle was initiated by the opponent, in which case it is two per Awaken).

*Personnel Battles.* Borg drones are not quite so intimidating in personnel battles as Borg Cubes are in starship battles. Indeed, communication and navigation drones hardly live up to the claim made about them on the Android Headlock card: "drones are physically stronger than humanoids" (sure, if the humanoid is Katherine Pulaski). But the drones are no slouches, either. Each Eight of Nineteen (Assault Drone) present in an Away Team gives each Borg present STRENGTH +2. Two or three Eight of Nineteens in an Away Team produces a fighting force against which even Klingons might suffer. Eleven of Nineteen (Bio-Med Drone) functions as kind of poor Borg's Genetronic Replicator, recycling killed Borg into the owner's draw deck for later reuse. And, of course, Three of Nineteen (Talon Drone) has the ability to immediately abduct and assimilate any adversary it stuns (for more information on this, consult the Personnel Assimilation Directive for more details on this).

## 2. Gaining Attack Authorization

As seen above, the power of a Borg Cube can be intimidating to its opponents and intoxicating to its owner. However, the collective's potential reign of terror is checked by the game mechanics that constrain what the Borg may do. In general, the Borg may not take any actions that they are not directed or permitted to take by their current objective. For battle, this means that the Borg may not initiate battle unless their current objective authorizes battle initiation. Unfortunately for those Borg players enticed by visions of the wreckage at Wolf 359 or the scar on the bleak surface of Jouret IV, current Borg objectives are rather limiting in this respect. Moreover, the Borg may pursue only one Borg-only objective at a time. (They may, however, concurrently use other objectives that are not marked Borg-only. Thus your collective may not pursue Assimilate Starship and Assimilate Counterpart at the same time, but may pursue Eliminate Starship while having Beware of Q in play.)

As a general rule, you must have a defense Borg present to initiate an attack. This is analogous to the rule that requires other affiliations to have a leader present in order to initiate an attack, although a defense Borg is not considered a leader.



*Eliminate Starship.* This is currently the only objective authorizing the Borg to initiate battle against an opposing ship. When you activate Eliminate Starship as your collective's objective, you must immediately choose one opposing ship as your target. Eliminate Starship then gives your Borg permission to initiate attacks against that ship, and only against that ship. Note, however, that until that ship is destroyed or the objective is removed from play in some other fashion (e.g., with A Change of Plans), your Borg may not pursue any other objective than the destruction of the target ship. Note also that you do not score any points from successful completion of Eliminate Starship.

*Assimilate Counterpart.* This is currently the only objective authorizing the Borg to initiate personnel battles. When you activate Assimilate Counterpart as your collective's objective, you must immediately choose one unique male personnel controlled by your opponent. Assimilate Counterpart then gives your Borg permission to beam to the target's ship or Away Team location and initiate battle against the target's crew or Away Team, and only against the target's crew or Away Team. When one of your Borg personnel engages the target in battle, you have the option of immediately abducting him. If you exercise this option, your Borg immediately lose their authorization to beam to and initiate attacks against the target's crew or Away Team (though see the discussion of retaliation below). Note, however, that until the target has been assimilated as a counterpart (through successful probing, as described on the Assimilate Counterpart card) or the objective is removed from play in some other fashion (e.g., with A Change of Plans), your Borg may not pursue any other objective than the assimilation of the target. Using the options that Assimilate Counterpart gives you, you may temporarily transform Assimilate Counterpart into a de facto "Eliminate Opposing Personnel" objective. To accomplish this, simply choose not to abduct the target when your Borg engage him in battle. Stun him instead, and at the end of the battle kill at least one opposing personnel by winning the battle. (To ensure that you win the battle, make sure your drones outnumber the opposing crew or Away Team, and use at least three Eight of Nineteens in your Away Team). This can go on until the personnel randomly selected to die at the end of battle is the target of Assimilate Counterpart. When that personnel dies, you must immediately discard Assimilate Counterpart because it no longer has a valid target. On your next available card play, you may play another Assimilate Counterpart, select a new target, and begin the process again. As long as this goes on, you have permission to attack certain opposing personnel. And should your opponent choose to counter-attack on her or his own turn, you gain additional attack authorization for your ships (see the discussion of retaliation below). If you choose to pursue this strategy, keep firmly in mind the fact that none of this will net you any points.

The discussion above focuses on receiving attack authorization from your current objective. There are, however, four other cards that grant attack authorization to your Borg, and one that looks like it might, but doesn't.

*Gowron of Borg.* This counterpart, one of the Enhanced First Contact premium cards, has the special ability to allow his hive to initiate an attack once per game. That may be all you need. If you want to use him, though, be sure to take account of his [AU] icon, and

don't forget that you may not have both Gowron of Borg and Locutus of Borg in play simultaneously, since both are counterparts (unless you demote one with He Will Make an Excellent Drone).

*Saltah'na Clock.* If you can get a Saltah'na Clock aboard your Cube, you can do a lot of damage. The Saltah'na Clock actually requires your personnel to initiate a battle (ship or personnel, depending on what is possible and/or appropriate) whenever possible. Of course, getting it aboard your Cube may be a bit tricky (requiring a successful probe plus a Survey Drone), and it does not give you the option of not battling if you'd prefer otherwise.

*Conundrum.* If your Borg encounter this dilemma and your crew's total INTEGRITY is less than 40, you must immediately choose one of your opponent's ships, and then do nothing except chase and attack that ship (note that your ship is stopped if the crew does not have the necessary INTEGRITY; the chase must begin on your next turn). Conundrum overrides affiliation-specific attack restrictions, which means that a Borg vessel under the influence of Conundrum may, indeed must, attack an opposing ship regardless of your collective's current objective. Think of Conundrum as temporarily suspending your current objective, if you have one, and giving you a new objective: attack an opposing ship. Since Conundrum overrides normal battle restrictions, no defense subcommand Borg is necessary to initiate battle while your crew is under Conundrum's influence. Once you have attacked (n.b.: attacked, not destroyed) the target ship, however, the influence of the Conundrum expires (the dilemma is discarded) and all relevant affiliation battle restrictions are in force again. As a Borg player, you may be tempted to seed a Conundrum and encounter it yourself, giving yourself attack authorization. If you choose this strategy, be aware that you must commit yourself to an objective that allows you to scout a space mission in order to encounter the Conundrum. Then, once you have attacked the target ship, you must resume your current objective (or discard it using A Change of Plans). Also, the crew of a fully staffed Borg Cube (it is very risky to use this strategy with a Scout Vessel or Sphere) has a minimum INTEGRITY of 36 (defense and navigation subcommand drones have INTEGRITY 5; the Borg Queen has INTEGRITY 6; communication subcommand drones have INTEGRITY 7; Locutus has INTEGRITY 9), so make sure you count your INTEGRITY carefully before triggering a self-seeded Conundrum.

*The Issue Is Patriotism.* If your Borg encounter this card from your opponent's Q-Continuum, you must immediately initiate a battle at a location where your opponent has one or more ships or Away Teams. The Issue Is Patriotism overrides affiliation-specific attack restrictions, which means that a Borg collective under the influence may, indeed must (if part of the collective is at the same location as an opposing force that it can target), attack an opposing force regardless of your current objective. Since The Issue Is Patriotism overrides normal battle restrictions, no defense subcommand Borg is necessary to initiate battle while your crew is under the influence of The Issue Is Patriotism. Once you have attacked (n.b.: attacked, not defeated) the target force, however, the influence of The Issue Is Patriotism expires (it is discarded) and all relevant affiliation battle restrictions are in force again. As a Borg player, you may wish you could

play The Issue Is Patriotism on yourself. But because it is a Q-Continuum card, you cannot do so. Your Borg will only experience The Issue Is Patriotism if your opponent stocks it in his or her Q-Continuum side deck.

*Scout Encounter.* When a player encounters the Scout Encounter dilemma, that player's opponent may download to that location a scout ship staffed by one or two universal personnel. According to the Scout Encounter card, "That ship may (if possible) initiate battle against you or move away." Unlike Conundrum and The Issue Is Patriotism, Scout Encounter does not override affiliation attack restrictions, precisely because of the wording "may (if possible)." Thus, if you (playing Borg) seed Scout Encounter, the Borg Scout Vessel that you download when your opponent encounters Scout Encounter may not initiate battle against your opponent's ship at that location unless you immediately reveal an Eliminate Starship objective previously played as a Hidden Agenda.

There is one other way the Borg may receive authorization to attack, without the use of any cards.

*Retaliation: Returning Fire and Counter-Attacking.* The above discussion explains the constraints on the Borg initiating battles. When the collective's adversaries initiate the battle, however, the gloves come off. If your opponent initiates battle against your Borg, you are permitted by the battle rules to retaliate. Retaliation takes two forms. During the battle your opponent initiated, you may return fire. If your opponent initiated a starship battle, your Borg ship may return fire using its WEAPONS against the ship or ships that fired at it (and only against the ship or ships that fired at it). If your opponent initiated a personnel battle, your Borg personnel may return fire by using their STRENGTH to stun and mortally wound personnel in the crew or Away Team that attacked them (and only the personnel in the crew or Away Team that attacked them). Your Away Team or crew may return fire even if no defense subcommand Borg is present. On your turn immediately following the turn in which your opponent initiated an attack against your Borg, your Borg may counter-attack. No matter what kind of battle your opponent initiated, your Borg ships may target your opponent's ships and outposts, and your Borg personnel may target your opponent's personnel (if they are on the same planet, ship, or outpost). However, your counter-attack may only target opposing forces that are still at the same location where the previous attack was initiated, and each of your crews or Away Teams that counter-attacks must include a defense subcommand Borg. If you want your opponent to start the battle (so you will have a larger number of targeting choices), you can try to force your opponent to attack you by seeding Conundrum, and by seeding Q-Flashes with a generous stock of The Issue Is Patriotism in your Q-Continuum side deck.

## F. Personnel Assimilation

Players who choose to play Borg in the Star Trek Customizable Card Game have several methods available for assimilating opposing personnel. The variety of choices can sometimes be confusing. There are several different methods for assimilating opposing personnel, each keyed to individual cards.

*Borg Servo (First Contact)*. The Borg Servo dilemma offers you the possibility of assimilating an opposing personnel without the direct involvement of any of your own Borg personnel. Unless Cybernetics and MEDICAL are present in the opposing crew or Away Team that encounters this dilemma, that crew or Away Team is "stopped" and one of the personnel in that crew or Away Team (randomly selected from those encountering the dilemma) is assimilated and undergoes the transformations specified in the First Contact Rules supplement. The assimilation is immediate. Your new drone remains where it is, whether aboard an opponent's ship or outpost or on a planet, until retrieved somehow by your Borg (e.g., by a Borg ship arriving and beaming up your new drone). Your opponent's forces may, of course, attack your drone (once they become "unstopped"), so you will probably want to spirit your drone away quickly.

*Talon Drone (Three of Nineteen) (First Contact)*. Whenever your Talon Drone stuns an adversary in a personnel battle, you have the option of abducting and assimilating the stunned adversary. If you choose to exercise this option, your Talon Drone and its adversary are immediately removed from the personnel battle and the adversary is immediately assimilated, undergoing the changes specified in the First Contact rules supplement. You may beam your Talon Drone and the new drone away if you wish (and if you have the means to do so, such as a Borg ship, present), but both your Talon Drone and the new drone are "stopped." Note that you may not assimilate a counterpart in this fashion (see Assimilate Counterpart below).

*Assimilation Tubules (First Contact)*. The Assimilation Tubules interrupt gives you an additional option when your Talon Drone is involved in a personnel battle. Since Assimilation Tubules plays after the overall winner of the personnel battle has been determined, this option will obviously not be available if you elect to have your Talon Drone abduct and assimilate a stunned adversary (unless you have multiple Talon Drones in your Away Team). If a Talon Drone is in your Away Team at the end of a personnel battle, you may play Assimilation Tubules to assimilate a mortally wounded adversary instead of having that adversary die from the mortal wounds. The target personnel is immediately assimilated, undergoing the changes specified in the First Contact rules. Note that you may not assimilate a counterpart in this fashion (see Assimilate Counterpart below). Also note that the Talon Drone's special ability does not grant you permission to attack an opposing crew or Away Team. You must acquire that permission in some other way.

*Assimilation Table (First Contact)*. The Assimilation Table is currently used only for assimilating a counterpart (see Assimilate Counterpart below) or for downloading Ocular Implants to one of your Borg. You cannot currently use the Assimilation Table to assimilate a drone.

*Assimilate Counterpart (First Contact)*. Assimilate Counterpart is the most valuable, and correspondingly the most difficult, way to assimilate opposing personnel. When you play Assimilate Counterpart, you must immediately select an opponent's unique male personnel as your target. Once you have done this, your Borg have permission to beam to

and battle the target's crew or Away Team. If any of your Borg personnel engage the target in combat, you may elect to have that Borg abduct the target. If you choose to abduct, the target and your Borg who engaged him in battle immediately cease to participate in the battle. You may beam them away if you wish (and you have the appropriate cards present), but both are "stopped." After the cards are "unstopped," you may "escort" the abducted target to an Assimilation Table and place the target on the table. Once the target is occupying an Assimilation Table, you have permission to probe. If your probe card bears any Borg subcommand icon, the target is assimilated and immediately undergoes the transformations specified in the First Contact Rules Supplement. Also, you attach the Assimilate Counterpart card to the counterpart. As long as the Assimilate Counterpart card remains on the target, Assimilate Counterpart gives you 5 points for each skill dot icon in the counterpart's skill box. These points are not considered bonus points, since they are granted by a Borg-only objective card. These points are lost if, for any reason, the Assimilate Counterpart objective is removed from the assimilated counterpart (e.g., by He Will Make an Excellent Drone).

*Add Distinctiveness* (Enhanced First Contact). This incident grants you 1 point for each skill dot icon in the skill boxes of personnel you assimilate as drones. Since the points come from an incident card, not from a [BO] objective card, they are bonus points.

## G. General Deckbuilding Considerations

With any affiliation, there are some deckbuilding considerations that are common to all decks played with that affiliation. Here are some factors to consider when building any Borg deck.

### 1. Probe Ratios

Because Borg decks are so heavily dependent on probe outcomes, the ratio of good probes to bad probes should be considered when building a Borg deck. The general rule of thumb, of course, is to maximize your good probes while minimizing your bad probes. While that may sound like it is "easier said than done," there are some easy and practical steps you can take to maximize your probing probabilities.

One of the best and most basic steps is simply to coordinate your drone selections with your probing requirements. Fortunately, the specific probing requirements on certain objectives make this rather easy to do. For example, if you are building a deck that chiefly emphasizes the Establish Gateway objective, you will need to reveal a communication (blue) or navigation (green) subcommand icon for a successful probe. You can maximize your probe potential by skewing your drone selections toward the navigation and communication subcommands (in that order). Notably, all of the Borg ships require navigation subcommands for staffing--and the smaller ships (Borg Scout Vessels and Borg Spheres) require *only* those subcommands. Moreover, by emphasizing multiples of a particular objective, you do have the chance of revealing another copy of that objective as a probe card, and an objective is always a good probe for its twin.

To supplement the strategy just described, use a Q's Tent side deck as a download source. The Q's Tent card itself bears no subcommand icons, and thus is a bad probe for Borg-only objectives. However, using a Q's Tent side deck does not require you to stock Q's Tent doorways in your draw deck. You can simply store thirteen cards there that you can download by other means. For example, you might store defense drones there in your Establish Gateway deck, and download them as needed using the Borg Queen's special skill, Activate Subcommands, or (under appropriate circumstances) Awaken.

Try to limit yourself to support cards that can be seeded or downloaded from Q's Tent if they do not bear appropriate probe results. Since the Borg can download so much of what they need, don't be shy about including multiples of cards of which you really only need one or two copies.

## 2. Probe Rigging

Perhaps carefully constructing your probe ratios isn't certain enough for you. In that case, you should investigate different strategies for rigging your probe outcomes to be favorable.

One of the most efficient methods for doing so is an early acquisition of The Orb of Prophecy and Change. That Orb artifact allows you, once each turn, to glance at the top card of your draw deck and place it anywhere within your draw deck. Use this ability just before your end-of-turn actions. If the top card is a good probe, move it down one card and draw the one on top of it as your end-of-turn card draw. Alternately, leave a good probe on top, and use one of your drones or the Queen to download something from your Q's Tent side deck. Beware of two dangers attendant to the Orb, however. First, it is non-duplicatable; if your opponent grabs an Orb of Prophecy and Change before you do, yours cannot come into play. Second, the Orb works as an equipment card, so it is susceptible to disruptor overload.

Another method of probe rigging, but one that takes a little more work, involves self-seeding dilemmas that will send your personnel to the top of your draw deck. This is particularly useful in space with Cube-oriented decks. Seed Chula: The Lights as the last card to be encountered at a space mission you intend to scout from a Cube. When you scout, be sure that you will still have the CUNNING>24 that you will need to get past the dilemma after losing one personnel. Usually, Seven of Nine (attribute total 21), Weyoun of Borg (22), Bareil of Borg (23), Dukat of Borg (24), or the Queen (24) will move to the top of your draw deck. If you're not using Service the Collective or you lose your counterpart to your draw deck, download something from Q's Tent to leave the personnel card right on top of the deck. On your next turn, you'll have a card on top with all three subcommand icons.

If you try to rig your probes with these strategies, do keep in mind that Q the Referee gives The Juggler a referee icon and therefore can download it. If your opponent stocked The Juggler, you may not have such a sure thing after all.

## H. Deck Archetypes and Modules

Another section of this book treats particular deck types in some detail. This portion of this chapter will simply give a quick overview of selected Borg deck archetypes and modules.

### 1. Scout Swarm Decks

This deck was popularized by Evan Lorentz (Decipher's "Mot the Barber") soon after the First Contact expansion appeared. A basic swarm deck consists primarily of Borg Scout Vessels, navigation drones, Countermeasure Drones, and Adapt: Negate Obstruction interrupts. The Scout Vessels are reported with crew to a spaceline end as per their game text, and drones are thrown at scouting attempts with reckless abandon (they are, after all, expendable). Once the Gamma Quadrant was introduced, Gamma swarm decks became popular, although the Dominion makes these more risky.

### 2. Cube Decks

As the name implies, Cube Decks involve loading up a Borg Cube or two with a dozen or more interlinked drones. Dilemmas tend not to be too much of a problem for heavily staffed cubes (except for Quantum Singularity Lifeforms). As new dilemmas are introduced, the number of drones needed grows. The Cube(s) could be reported and staffed at the Borg Outpost, or downloaded via Retask.

### 3. Sphere Decks

A variation on the cube deck, sphere decks use cubes as mobile outposts for Borg Spheres. The incident Sphere Encounter boosts the spheres' RANGE to make them reasonably good midrange ships. The spheres can take the risks while the cubes serve as safe havens.

### 4. Stop First Contact/Population Nine Billion - All Borg

The Stop First Contact objective is not really all that easy to pull off, but when combined with Population Nine Billion - All Borg it has great payoffs. Once you have completed Stop First Contact, you have also inherently completed Assimilate Homeworld and have scored 40 points. Population Nine Billion - All Borg then doubles the point value of subsequent Alpha Quadrant objectives you complete, so you only need a Salvage Starship (or an Establish Gateway plus Resistance Is Futile) to polish off the game.

### 5. Service the Collective/Cryosatellite Pull

This is not a deck type as such but a module present in many Borg decks. Since most of the preassimilated counterparts (Locutus excluded) are [AU] personnel, they may be seeded aboard a Cryosatellite. By completing an objective targeting the location where

the Cryosatellite is seeded, you may be able to retrieve the counterpart quickly and thus get Service the Collective's speed boost up and running.

## 6. Cube Quickstart

If you will be using a Borg Cube in your deck, here's one way to get it staffed quickly. Seed the Complink Drone, whose special skill allows it to seed at your Borg Outpost. Seed Defend Homeworld, and use it first turn to download any SECURITY Borg. About one-half to two-thirds of your deck should be Awaken interrupts; hopefully you will draw at least three. Use one to download Seven of Nine, one to download a Transwarp Drone, and the other to download any drone you choose. Since Seven of Nine's special skill allows her to contribute all three of her subcommand icons to staffing, you now have a fully staffed Cube ready to move to the Alpha Quadrant.

### I. Stinging the Scorpion: How to Resist the Borg

This section of the article is for those players who find themselves frustrated by playing *against* Borg decks. If you anticipate facing the Borg, there are certain strategies you can employ to stem the advancing gray tide.

#### 1. Dilemma Strategy

If you anticipate running up against Borg decks, and yet you want to be prepared for non-Borg decks as well, your best bet is to avoid point-related or gender-related dilemmas. Wall dilemmas, and dilemmas that have a strong wall component, are equally effective against the Borg as against other affiliations--sometimes more so, since the Borg typically scout planets in small numbers.

Of course, the Borg can use Adapt: Negate Obstruction to get past most dilemmas on the second try. You can combat this strategy using Amanda Rogers to nullify the Adapt cards. You might lose a few points to The Line Must Be Drawn Here (though probably not to Oof!, since as a bad probe it will show up in few Borg decks), but that is a small price to pay for keeping the Borg away from their objective. If you choose this strategy, however, be aware that Six of Thirteen, the Scout Drone, enables your Borg opponent to recycle those nullified Adapt cards and a Countermeasure Drone may be able to download them again almost immediately.

#### 2. Avoiding Battle

Since Borg Cubes are so powerful, you may wish to avoid battling them. This is largely in your control since the Borg have such tight requirements to meet before they can receive attack authorization. The simplest way to avoid battling the Borg is to forego attacking them. If your opponent has a Borg Cube nearby, don't kill that drone that used to be a key personnel before the Borg Servo assimilated her or him. Just leave it alone. Similarly, just ignore that Borg Scout Vessel that suddenly appeared when your ship encountered the Scout Encounter dilemma.



Avoiding battle brought on by an Eliminate Starship objective is more difficult, since the Borg player will often leave the objective hidden (Eliminate Starship may play as a Hidden Agenda) until s/he is in a position to attack your ship immediately. Should your ship survive the first battle (perhaps using Anti-Matter Spread, which will drop a fully staffed Borg Cube's WEAPONS to 19 or less under most circumstances, because all Borg drones have a CUNNING of 5 or 7 and no Borg currently has the ability to add to other Borg personnel's individual CUNNING scores), you may be able to return to your outpost and take advantage of its SHIELDS. Since the Eliminate Starship objective targets a particular ship, and not a particular crew, you may wish to get your crew off the targeted ship and onto another ship. Your Borg opponent receives no points for eliminating a starship, and must keep trying to destroy the ship until it is destroyed or until Eliminate Starship is replaced using A Change of Plans.

Personnel battles initiated by the Borg will generally be rare. Since Assimilate Counterpart is the only objective that permits the Borg to initiate Away Team battles, and since each collective may have only one counterpart in play at a time, Borg-initiated personnel battles should not occur very often (but see the strategy tips above--there are ways around this limitation). As noted above, Borg drones are not particularly strong unless they are accompanied by Eight of Nineteen (Assault Drone) in multiples. On the other hand, Borg players know this, and are likely to stock multiple Eights of Nineteens if they are planning to assimilate a counterpart. Remember that when pursuing a target for assimilation as a counterpart, the Borg need not overcome that target in battle; all they need to do is engage that target in battle. Prepare Assault Teams allows you to split your forces, reducing the probability that the Borg targeting your personnel for assimilation as a counterpart will engage the target in personnel combat. You can also deprive the Borg of their prize by playing Mercy Kill on the target after abduction but before your Borg opponent's next turn (which, because of the requirement that the target be occupying an Assimilation Table combined with the fact that the target and his Borg escort are stopped after leaving the battle, is the earliest chance your Borg opponent will have to probe for the Assimilate Counterpart objective).

Whether you are playing Borg or anticipate playing against a Borg opponent, remember this: regardless of their capabilities, the Borg must have *permission* to initiate an attack. They can only get that permission from an objective, encountering a card that overrides affiliation attack restrictions, or the initiation of an attack by opposing forces.

### 3. Using Battle Offensively

Although the Borg have immense battle capability, battling is a major time-waster for the Borg under most circumstances, because a Borg player cannot probe for the success of an objective targeting a spaceline location at which their Borg battled on the Borg player's current turn or the opponent's previous turn. In other words, you can delay your Borg opponent's success by initiating battles yourself.

If you are using this strategy, your goal should not be to win the battles. You just want them to occur. Park a ship at the spaceline location adjacent to the location targeted by your Borg opponent's objective (be sure your ship has enough RANGE to get to the targeted location, and back, in a single turn). On your turn, move your ship to the targeted location, beam one leader from your ship to the Borg ship (Borg SHIELDS do not inhibit transport), and move the ship back to its starting position. Then have your intruder initiate a personnel battle. Your personnel will most likely die, but you will stall the Borg from probing for a turn. Borg players take note: the best way to circumvent this strategy is to move away from a location at which you have just completed scouting, if you must otherwise wait a turn to probe. The battle must occur at the targeted location to inhibit probing. However, you also cannot probe using cards that just battled (even if they move to a new location), so be sure to keep that in mind.

## **Affiliation Overview: Bajorans**

### **May the Prophets Guide You**

By Ted Witt

Remarkably, one of ST:CCG's most powerful affiliations is often overlooked. Many people concentrate on the vast numbers of Federation personnel and ships, the versatility of the Romulan Star Empire, the Honor and potency of the Klingon Empire. They often overlook those spunky Bajorans! I'm here to show that our Resistance-loving wrinkled-nosed, earring wearing, prophet loving, Bajorans are in fact one of the most potent forces in the card game we love. Walk with me, my child; your 'Pah is strong!!

The Bajorans:

The Bajorans were introduced as a full affiliation in the Deep Space Nine expansion and the majority of the Bajoran cards reflect that heritage. As with the TV show, the action of the Bajoran affiliation stays focused mainly around their homeworld (Alter Records) and the resulting Bajoran Region. Deep Space Nine is easily the most accessible (and flexible) nor in the game, and the Bajorans excel at taking advantage of the card manipulation, and downloading features that station offers. While they were never a military power--and correspondingly lack of regular universe "capital ships"--they have extremely flexible craft. The Mirror Universe expansion gives the Bajorans an AU capital ship: the 10-9-8 Warship, but the lack of AU icon Bajorans makes it a tad more difficult to fly. Although the Bajorans do not have a particularly large pool of personnel, they have some of the best in the game. Their Headquarters, the Chamber of Ministers, and a few other reporting tricks give the Bajorans remarkable flexibility and depth, despite their limited numbers. By staying in their region, having access to focused personnel and great flexibility in deck manipulation and downloads, the prophets guide the Bajorans to great victories.

A. Personnel:

As of the Mirror Mirror expansion, there are 57 different Bajoran affiliation personnel. There are 8 officers, 4 engineers, 5 medical, 4 scientists, 6 security, 13 VIPs, and 17 civilians. These classifications belie the fact that many Bajorans are multi-skilled, and there are super scientists (Mora Pol) and super Security Officers (Odo). Like the affiliations introduced from Deep Space Nine, the Bajorans have no mission specialists...but a remarkable flexibility in their 10 support personnel. They can dilemma bust with the best of them! And several of their missions call for specific "Bajoran" requirements, Vedeks, orb-icons, Bajoran VIP's, etc.

So much of the current game revolves around getting quality people into play as quickly as possible. The speed game drives many decks--after all, if you can assemble the people to bust through dilemmas and solve missions faster than your opponents, you're going to win! To that end the Bajorans a lot of flexibility in their free reports.

1. Free reporting mechanisms

- a. The Chamber of Ministers

The Bajoran Headquarters is a feature found in many Bajoran decks. And for good reason. Ministers, Vedeks, and Kais can all report for free there. There are currently 9 Bajorans that fit this category--and several of them are remarkably powerful. Most of these Bajoran dignitaries are VIP's...Kai Opaka, Kai Winn, Jaro Essa, etc. Two are both common cards and universal--Minister Rozahn and Vedek Sorad! But digging a bit deeper in the skill base reveals a remarkable focus to begin to build a deck around: Among the skills contained on these religious folk are three scientists, an engineer, medical, stellar cartography, biology and exobiology, navigation, and more diplomacy and leadership than you can shake a jumba stick at! Vedek Dax, a Bajoran incarnation of everyone's favorite Trill, has a potent array of mission solving and dilemma busting skills. Kai Opaka remains the only personnel in the game with leadership x3! And there are three personnel (Dax, Opaka, and Bareil) with the potent and powerful orb icon (we'll see more of its use later).

- b. First Minister Shakaar and the Chamber of Ministers

First Minister Shakaar, a Tribbles expansion persona of Shakaar Edon, has a remarkable special skill that vastly opens up the free reporting power of the Chamber of Ministers. His special skill says: "Once each turn, allows your Bajoran CIVILIAN to report for free to Chamber of Ministers if present." This essentially gives you a second Bajoran Headquarters. There are seventeen Bajoran civilians, stacked with security, an engineer, navigation, transporter skill, acquisition, youth, anthropology, and many others. However, two are from the Mirror Universe, so you'll need Crossover to report them. First Minister Shakaar and the Chamber give the Bajorans a remarkable depth of free reports...getting this mechanic in to

play couldn't be easier. Sarish Rez has a special download of the First Minister! You can Ops download Sarish to the promenade shops and download the First Minister directly to the chamber.

c. Quark's Bar

While often considered a staple in Ferengi decks, Quark's Bar can help provide more free reports to the Bajorans...three Bajorans (Leeta, Mardah, and the dual affiliation Rom) along with the non-aligned Aluura can report for free to the Bar. Rom provides a quick source of high cunning, a super Engineer, and physics; Leeta can power a potent gambling surge with a download of Dabo; Aluura pumps attributes and offers diplomacy and honor; Mardah science and biology. And who doesn't want to look at the dabo girls!! Quark's opens up other possibilities with Morn and free card draws (you'll need them after all these reports!), latinum for equipment buying -- cargo runs anyone?, and, combined with a Fed/Bajoran treaty (now Guinan can play for free too!), a potent deck type in itself. And don't forget that these civilians can provide more card manipulation at the Promenade Shops...Leeta going shopping!!

d. Orb of Wisdom

Perhaps the greatest of the Bajoran Orbs, the orb of Wisdom guides the prophets in all things wise, allowing for a free report (if with your Orb Icon personnel) and boosting the integrity of those present. While the artifact will have to be earned before it can be used, and you'll need an orb icon personnel to take full advantage of its power...HQ: Return Orbs to Bajor can help vastly in its acquisition. Seed this orb, followed by a Sarjenka, directly on Bajor. Use Defend Homeworld to download a Security personnel (Kira Nerys--who has a handy dandy orb icon!). Play HQ: Return Orbs to Bajor (for free too!) and get that Orb, 15 points, three card draws, and oodles of free reporting all in two turns!!

e. Tower of Commerce

Often overlooked as a benefit to the Bajorans, both Leeta and Mardah (as Ferengi/Bajoran dual affiliation civilians) can also report for free to the soggy Ferenginar. While the Ferengi have no treaties...they can most easily adapt and assist the Bajorans--especially when combined with that Federation/Bajoran treaty again! How? With the treaty in play (and remember it seeds!, Kai Opaka can special download it, or you can simply play it) you can further utilize a few other cards. Nog (as Federation personnel) can solve Ferenginar by himself. The Trois (dual Fed/Ferengi) also play for free to the Tower of Commerce. And Riker Wil can simply add a Bajoran icon to Deliver Message. Pallera has the requisite acquisition and can easily team up with a Bajoran VIP with diplomacy to

complete this hidden surprise... Ferengi/Bajoran combinations can be surpassingly potent.

f. The Intendant

With the Emblem of the Alliance in play, The Intendant can trigger another host of free card plays. She is named by the following MM Bajorans: Bareil, Javek Len, Romara Cal, and Taymar Bern. Additionally, don't forget the treat potential with the MM Cardassians Dorza and Security Chief Garak. Finally, two non-aligned MM folk might be of great assistance to your Bajoran deck: Ezri and Mr. Sisko--both of which can seriously help ANY Bajoran deck, but can add a lot of pop to a deck in the Mirror Universe environment.

2. Other Bajoran Reporting tricks

a. Deep Space Nine

Probably the most potent source of pinpoint precision for the Bajorans has to utilize the power of Deep Space Nine and its downloading capacity. While DS9 is great for deck manipulation (more on that later), the Bajorans are particularly adept at utilizing its downloading capacity. Ops lets you download to the various sites any personnel that could report there (and the Cargo Bay and Quarks' Bar have similar features). You need an officer? Download General Krim to Ops. Stuck behind a Berserk Changeling without the security? Download Odo to the security office or Mora Pol to the Science Lab. Need a ship? Download an interceptor to the Docking pads. Granted, these downloads cost you your card draw, but they can be game breaking when you need a specific card to pass a dilemma or solve a mission.

Mirror Terok Nor, while a Cardassian facility in the Mirror Universe, can offer many of these benefits to the Mirror quadrant Bajorans. This is more helpful in a full Mirror Universe deck, but the added possibility of ore processing without the risk of Reactor Overload may tempt you to at least splash your deck with our reversed friends...if only there was a Mirror Universe Bajoran engineer...

b. Bajoran Raider

A relatively new ship in the Bajoran arsenal...(and it is a bit weaker than the Interceptor) has an interesting feature that can help get Bajorans into play faster: it can report with crew! Granted, it only holds two personnel--but report with crew means equipment too. You can report the Raider to Bajor and fill it with equipment and two other personnel that may not report for free. That's potentially three (+ equipment) card plays for the

price of one!! Remember that trick of tenting for Sarish Rez to get First Minister Shakaar into play?? Combine that tent with a Bajoran Raider: if you draw the Raider, tent for Sarish. Report the Raider plus Sarish Rez and another Bajoran that you drew. Download First Minister Shakaar. Play a Vedek for free. Play a Civilian for free. That's potentially five personnel and a ship for one card play!

c. The Emissary

The Emissary has a special skill that also greatly assists the Bajorans: "Your Bajorans may report for duty where present." Instant, roving outpost! Need a Bajoran to a colony in the gamma quadrant? Easy, if the Emissary is there, your Bajorans will follow. Deep Space Nine about to be Sheliaked? Not a problem...if you had to STP a ship to your hand, report them to the Emissary later. I don't know HOW many games I have been playing against a Bajoran opponent and the ability to report to the Emissary saved them! Another great combo is to give the Orb of Wisdom to the Emissary: he has the requisite orb icon to maximize the reporting power, AND a special skill that allows Bajorans to report directly to him...a roving, free headquarters (with an integrity +5 boost!). Ouch! Since this special skill overcomes the quadrant restrictions, your Mirror Universe Bajorans can report to the Emissary as well, without the cost of Crossover.

d. Assign Support Personnel (ASP)

If the Bajorans don't have the mission specialists to assist you, they DO have a plethora of support personnel. A full 10 people, ranging from an Engineer with transporter skill and physics (Anara) to the Bajoran super-scientist (Mora Pol); Vedek Sorad, or Jabara and Romara Cal-two of the few true Medical classification Bajorans. Every classification (minus officer) is represented and for support skills you can choose from geology, archaeology, youth, computer skill, navigation, astrophysics, diplomacy, and lots more. While many players often use the ASP download immediately, I recommend saving the download until you need a specific skill or classification to solve a mission or get past a dilemma. Although if you really want to use ASP immediately, I'd recommend a download of Prylar Mond to the Bajoran shrine--the Prylar is one of the personnel needed to "conduct services" at the shrine, and with any other Bajoran, you'll immediately have access to one of the most powerful Bajoran deck manipulation techniques that exist!

B. Deep Space Nine and Deck Manipulation

While I've already touched briefly on the reporting and downloading power of the DS9, the former Cardassian mining station has many other features that make it a logical

choice as a Bajoran Facility. This section will examine how the prophets have blessed the Bajorans!

Let's look briefly at the facility itself...

Deep Space 9 always has the advantage over its "alter ego" Terok Nor: It seeds during the dilemma phase, while Terok Nor seeds during the facility phase. What this means is that a Bajoran player will always be able to get first crack at the station! Another advantage DS9 has over other facilities is that it can co-exist at Bajor with the Chamber of Ministers. This can help focus your resources even more by keeping them together, and with Defend Homeworld, protecting all of Bajor from attack. When seeding a nor, you are also allowed to seed six free sites. Originally, choosing which sites was an easy prospect: Ops, a docking site, security office, science lab, guest quarters, and promenade shops often made it into most Bajoran decks. Now, however, Quarks Bar, the Cargo Bay, and the Bajoran Shrine often squeeze out the other sites and make the selection more difficult. My rule of thumb: use the sites that offer you the most flexibility or contribute the most to your deck. For example, while the Bajoran Shrine doesn't really offer any additional reporting power (since Vedeks and Kais already play for free to the Chamber of Ministers) its capacity to manipulate your deck and discard pile is quite powerful. The promenade shops are another good choice...with so many Bajoran (and non-aligned civilians) you have a great location to report them...but you also get the advantage of potential card draws by "shopping". Choose sites that fit the focus of your particular deck.

1. DS9 as a deck manager!

- a. The Bajoran Shrine

The shrine is perhaps the most potent deck manipulation tool the Bajorans have! If you have a Prylar, Vedek, Kai and any other Bajoran present you are allowed to take "conduct services": discard a card, take the bottom card of your discard pile out of play or to the bottom of your draw deck, and draw a card. This lets you cycle cards you don't need in your hand back through your draw deck, and, "regenerate" those cards in your discard pile back to your draw deck. You'll burn through your deck in no time getting easy access to the cards that you need. Add an orb and you get the power of a second card draw! We've already seen how easy orbs are to get...another combo: after you've fetched Kira and an Orb, bring them to the Shrine and conduct away; with the Emissary and the Orb of Wisdom you have free plays and extra card draws! And unlike the Cardassians, that draw is not vulnerable to Reactor Overload!

- b. Guest Quarters

This site lets a VIP present draw two cards for a card draw and choose one to place beneath your draw deck...basically, another fast way to manipulate your draws so you can get to the card you want! It helps the Bajorans in particular because of their powerful VIPs--it's easy to get the personnel there to cycle these cards. However, building on the Ferengi/Bajoran connection--you can use a seeded Writ of Accountability (or a Q-the Referee + download of the Writ) to download Brunt directly to a quest quarters to set up this manipulation. Brunt is great because he (of course) is a VIP to power the Guest Quarters, but also offers the protection his download of the Writ provides against cheese. Either Bajoran or Ferengi can easily use the Guest Quarters to help power a deck. The Intendant might be even better; while you'll need Crossover to download her to the Alpha Quadrant and the Emblem of the Alliance to take full advantage of her seductive charms, once she is in play, she sets up the string of other free reports...and she can still manipulate the deck, too!

c. Promenade Shops

Civilians and "shopping". This site also helps the Bajorans--with gobs of civilians that can report here you have more flexible reporting...but more interestingly is if you probe successfully (event, interrupt, or equipment) you can draw a card. Granted, you'll want a deck that has a number of good probes to maximize your odds--but a cargo running deck or any other deck with good events (Bajoran Civil War, Duranja, etc.) will help provide a few extra critical card draws.

d. Cargo Bay.

Like the promenade shops, this site offers two distinct advantages--extra reporting flexibility and card draws in the form of "cargo runs". Reporting: any smuggling, acquisition, or non-aligned navigation can report here (or download here with a built in "ops-style" download). While there are only 3 Bajorans with smuggling (Kasidy Yates!, Lupaza, and Razka Karn) and 1 acquisition (Pallra) opening up the non-aligned to your deck can be extraordinarily helpful. But, if you "run cargo", you can also claim extra card draws for each mission you pass. Kasidy pumps this up significantly by drawing two additional cards for each cargo run she is on--which means with DS9 seeded at Bajor and the Chamber of Ministers also there, you can have Kasidy bring cargo from the Chamber to the Cargo Bay every turn for two free card draws--a very cool combo...

e. Quark's Bar.

Yep! Another mostly Ferengi site helping the Bajorans. With all the free plays the Bajorans can potentially acquire, you need as many card draws



as you can muster. Perhaps the easiest of all is simply having Morn sit in the bar!! But why stop there? Why not Dabo! Leeta (who plays free there anyway) can download the Dabo incident, which lets you "wager" cards from your discard pile. A successful probe (equipment, event, or skill dot) scores points...an unsuccessful probe scores card draws (or latinum downloads) equal to the number of dabo girls there (as long as Quark is present). You can always combine with a few other cards to help set up the probe you want: the Orb of Prophecy and Change, a self-seeded New Essentialists, or other probe-rigging cards. Don't forget that Quark's Bar can also seed at the Mirror Universe version of DS9...

## 2. Other Bajoran deck manipulation tricks

### a. HQ: Return Orbs to Bajor.

Oh shock...a mechanism to grab orbs early, draw three cards, and score 10 points! Wowser. The prophets LOVE this card. We'll see later in deck types that an orb deck is a classic Bajoran archetype--but since so many different types of Bajoran goodies can come from the orbs, its certainly worth mentioning it again here! Play HQ: Return Orbs to Bajor (for free if at the Chamber of Ministers), grab orbs, return to Bajor or to Mirror Bajor, BONUS!! Beware of Barry Waddle, however, as he has a special skill that can nullify ROTB.

### b. Orb of Prophecy and Change.

Shock! An Orb to help the Bajorans!! This orb lets you look at the top card of your draw deck (once each turn) and put it anywhere else in the draw deck. It's perfect for probe rigging (see what it is, if good, put it back on top--if not put it elsewhere which gets a different card on the top of your draw deck). It's a very powerful tool to burning through your deck to get to the cards you want...another combo: after returning the Orb of Prophecy and Change to Bajor, bring it to the shrine to double your drawing capacity!

### c. Renewal Scroll.

While on the subject of burning through your draw deck--this powerful event can also assist the Bajorans. Renewal scroll plays when you have three or more Bajorans in play. You can discard any number of cards from your hand and renew them by drawing the same number plus two more. This event works marvelously well combined with Referee Icon cards, Q-the Referee, and the Bajoran Shrine... Why? The shrine lets you cycle cards from your discard pile pack into your draw deck...and a Q the Ref can allow you to download Referee icon cards...Simply use Renewal Scroll to discard referee icon cards, then use the shrine to get one of those

cards back into your draw deck if you need them later. You can also use Renewal Scroll to fuel your discard pile to help with Dabo!

d. Process Ore.

Gasp! The Bajorans processing ore? Well with the Mirror Universe now a reality in terms of game play, processing ore is back with a vengeance. Either of the Mirror Nors and the Emblem of the Alliance can help you process at full speed. The Bajoran Connection? Overseer Odo, a fun Cardassian/Bajoran dual affiliation personnel with a special download of Process Ore. Combined with the free reporting of the Emblem of the Alliance and the seductive charms of the Indendant it might just be worth a glance in the looking glass.

C. Bajoran Missions

It doesn't do any good to write a tournament guide to the Bajorans without spending some time focusing on the missions that the Bajorans can solve! Fortunately, the Bajorans have several unique advantages in mission selection that help them excel as an affiliation.

1. The Bajor Regions.

1. No guide to the Bajorans would be complete without looking at the Bajor region itself. Because the Bajorans are not a warmongering affiliation, they really do not need to go too far afield from their home! There are currently five missions that make up the Bajor region and one that comprises the Mirror Bajor Region. This is advantageous to the Bajorans for several reasons. First, because all the missions seed next to each other, it is easy enough to keep your resources focused in one location. Don't forget that Bajoran Interceptors get a bonus while staying in a region too! It is very easy to get your personnel to and from the places you need to go. Second, the region can be used offensively--if you manage to get the region between your opponent's alpha quadrant missions you can ensure a long trip between them. This can help your dilemma combos, making Cytherians, for example, more powerful. Third, several of the missions have overlapping and easy requirements--the more focused you can keep your missions the better your deck will be for tournament play. Fourth, orb access. Characterize Neutrino emissions lets you seed multiple orbs at a space location...a definite plus to decks where orbs supplement your strategy. Fifth, the Bajoran Wormhole. Because the wormhole plays in the Bajoran region you will have easier access to the gamma quadrant or to the Mirror Universe. And with Ultimatum (which lets you download the Bajoran Wormhole prior to game play) you can create an additional Bajoran Region location for Deep Space 9 to seed. This can help you avoid dilemmas that can affect DS9 (Sheliak, Dal'rok, etc.). Sixth: Mirror Bajor. This "second" Bajor Region works just like the first one--Orbs can be

returned there, interceptors still get a range bonus, etc. But with a Multidimensional Transport Device you have a quick escape if threatened in the alpha quadrant...or, if you are thinking more aggressively, easy access to launch a raid on Deep Space Nine in either quadrant.

a. Alter Records

The Bajoran Homeworld. Most Bajoran decks will include this mission mainly because the Chamber of Ministers seeds here. Securing the homeworld is an easy enough task...and don't forget a quick "homeworld orb." It is also possible to use Starry Night to download TWO equipment card orbs. DS9 can seed here as well creating a very focused start. You may want to consider seeding Homefront as well to protect your opponent from unleashing a string of nasty dilemmas there.

b. Relocate Settlers

A span 1!, 30 point mission that Kira Nerys can solve alone or Odo and a number of Vedeks can solve quite easily. This mission is amazingly easy with three sets of requirements: VIP + Diplomacy + SECx2 OR SECx2 + Treachery OR Kira Nerys. It fits quite easily into a number of different archetypes.

c. Acquire Illicit Explosives and Characterize Neutrino Emissions

Both of these missions require the somewhat elusive skill of physics. However, Tahna Los solves Acquire Illicit Explosives all by himself, and either Vedek Dax or Rom goes a very long ways to solving Characterize Neutrino Emissions. Romara Cal is a Bajoran MM support personnel with Medical, Biology, and Physics...he'll help a lot against the devastating medical dilemmas in space. Again, quick missions, and additional orb access.

d. Refuse Immigration

Refuse Immigration is perhaps the most complicated of the Bajoran region missions, but fits very well into a Bajoran Treachery deck. Either version of the Vedek Winn persona goes a very long way to solving: the Vedek provides all but the cunning requirement of the first possible requirement; Kai Winn provides all but the weapons! Put her on an interceptor and Jaro Essa on another one and you have two ways to assault this mission. All three personnel play for free to the Chamber of Ministers!

e. Disrupt Alliance.

While this technically isn't a Bajoran Mission, it is worth mentioning. Orbs can be returned here...and your opponent may launch an attack from this mission. Be warned: the Bajoran Wormhole: Mirror Universe REQUIRES that a regular Bajoran Wormhole be used, which means that the more aggressive denizens of that looking glass world will no doubt be a bit closer to you. But don't overlook its strategic possibilities for you either: since the Federation/Bajoran treaty seeds, the VERY speedy and skill heavy mirror federation (Terrans) might give you another reason to team up.

## 2. One Person Mission Solving

In addition to having the Bajor Region with very easy requirements and access, there are a number of other missions that the Bajorans can solve with amazing precision. These missions go along way to focusing the Bajorans--especially considering they can all be downloaded via Deep Space 9, Ops, and the appropriate site!

### a. Orb Negotiations

While Cardassian Prime is often the focus of Cardassian decks, it can be exceedingly useful to the Bajorans. First, multiple orbs can seed here, providing even more back up and flexibility to an orb deck. But for sheer mission solving, it's hard to beat either! With two possible ways to solve--Diplomacy x3 + a Bajoran VIP OR any Orb icon personnel; the Bajorans have SIX personnel who can solve it single handedly: Kai Opaka, Bareil Antos, Bareil(the Mirror version), Kira Nerys, The Emissary, and Vedek Dax. All six of these personnel are extraordinarily useful in a number of decks. Diplomacy and a VIP aren't useless either!

### b. Investigate Coup

Officer + Leadership x2 + Security + Navigation OR General Krim...Wait, what's that: General Krim is simply named as a requirement--another one person solving machine...Kira (in either persona) provides all but one of the leadership. And leadership is an amazingly common skill among the Bajorans!

### c. Search for Weapons

An unusual choice of a mission, perhaps, but Colonel Day solves this one all by himself too. Kira and some help with a treacherous friend has the gusto too.

Here is one combination of six missions--all protected by fair play--that minimized the number of Bajorans needed to solve: Alter Records, Relocate

Settlers, Acquire Illicit Explosives, Orb Negotiations, Investigate Coup, and Characterize Neutrino Emissions. Kira Nerys, General Krim, Tahna Los, Vedek Dax, and Nalan Bal provide all the skills to solve all six missions (securing the homeworld with HQ: Secure homeworld)...and you have built in redundancy and focus!! All you need to do is clear out those dilemmas!!

### 3. Bajorans in Space--The Gamma Quadrant

While the Dominion makes gamma based decks a bit more tentative, the Bajorans (perhaps due to their close proximity to the wormhole) have an amazing array of missions available in the Gamma Quadrant...and with The Emissary, you can report directly there! Again, utilizing a couple of other objectives and you can easily focus a deck around the distant quadrant. The objectives: Explore Gamma Quadrants and File Mission report can help tremendously. And, although the Bajorans can't make the best use of it, the 75th Rule of Acquisition can also help (Morn and Pallra are your best bets).

#### a. Changeling Research

A massive 40-point mission where Mora Pol and Weld Ram--both support personnel--can become a dynamic duo for mega points.

#### b. Investigate Rumors

Another great mission for the Bajorans with a couple of easy two member mission solving teams: Kira and Mora Pol or Kira and Odo or Odo and any Navigation personnel. Kira (or Odo) can be downloaded via Defend Homeworld; Mora Pol, Kallis Ven, and Nalan Bal (navigation personnel) can be downloaded with ASP. Easy, no card-play, first turn access to all the skills needed to solve the mission!

#### c. Gamma Science...!

Remarkably, Camping Trip, Colony Prep, Cure Blight, and Survey Star System, all Bajoran attemptable, gamma quadrant missions, require Science. Science, of course, is a skill needed on a number of difficult dilemmas (Scientific Method being the beefiest wall). If you need the science to overcome the dilemmas, why not use it to solve missions?? Three personnel who play free to the Chamber of Ministers, two Bajoran support, and one Dabo girl have science! These are all great foci to build a deck around.

### D. Other Bajoran Features

While presenting this guide to the Bajorans, I should look at a few other features that can help those perky Bajorans on to a quick victory.

## 1. Dilemma Busting

While solving missions is the primary objective, in order to score the necessary points to win the game, getting through dilemmas is critical to meeting that objective. Fortunately, I believe the Bajorans can dilemma bust with the best of them. Several dilemmas and special skills on the Bajorans can nullify outright some of the nastiest (hence, most common!) dilemmas in the game. Mora Pol walks right through a berserk changeling. Surmak Ren can get rid of the extremely devastating Aphasia Device. Founder Secret? No problem--Odo and Overseer Odo are changelings! Even more unusual dilemmas may have Bajoran solutions: Kai Opaka can dispose of Clan People. The Bajorans have both Kais and Generals for the annoying Executive Authorization. There are 8 Bajorans with integrity less than 4 for In the Pale Moonlight (although beware the attribute enhancing capabilities of other Bajorans). With treaties to the Dominion and the Federation, the dilemma busting machines of Dr. McCoy and Goran'Agar can join the team. There aren't a lot of dilemmas that the Bajorans have serious problems with.

One more thing: one of the most powerful filter dilemmas in the game, Chula: The Chandra, is also virtually laughable for the Bajorans: 22 (yes, twenty-two!), Bajorans have a cunning of 7; 17 Bajorans have a cunning of 8. The odds of a large number of Bajorans making it through the Chandra together is exceedingly good.

## 2. Attribute Enhancements

While busting dilemmas often require skills, specific personnel, and certain classifications, other dilemmas require large amounts of Integrity (Conundrum or Q or Alien Parasites) or Cunning (Ferengi Infestation)...the Bajorans are among the most efficient attribute enhancers in the game! Kieve Falor bumps all other civilian attributes +2. The Emissary pumps all Bajorans' integrity by 2. Bareil can download ANY equipment card: a gun, a PADD, Kukalaka, you name it! Leeta can download Kukalaka which ALSO enhances one's integrity. And the Orb of Wisdom does the same. Imagine, The Emissary, with the Orb of Wisdom, and a teddy bear--all Bajorans are going to integrity +8!! Q, beware... Ro Laren pumps up Maquis' cunning; Shakaar Edon pumps up other Bajorans strength by 2; Neela special downloads a phaser. Even the Earring of Li Nalas can pump up other resistance personnel by a huge +3--and there are a lot of Bajoran Resistance personnel. All of these tools can help the Bajorans accumulate the attributes they need very quickly.

## 3. Landable and easily accessible ships.

1. An interrupt, "Hidden Fighter" is one of the most powerful tools in the Bajoran arsenal--in this case the Bajoran Armada. Hidden Fighter can be

used to download a staffless ship to an away team on a planet, as well as the very important Event, Establish Landing Protocols. Any tool to get ships into play quickly, without exhausting a card play, can be a boon--and the Bajorans have FOUR ships that qualify: The Interceptor, Raider, Scout, and the often overlooked USS Yangtze Kiang. Each of these ships can land (with Establish Landing Protocols) while the Interceptor and Raider already have built in landing capabilities. Ships that land are extremely useful--they can not be targeted by other cards that attack ships unless they specify landed ships; they can pretty much ignore pollution decks, and can easily stay out of harm's way from battle. The Bajoran Freighter (the staffing heavy AU Bajoran Warship is the only other ship with a tractor beam) can play for free to the Docking Ports on DS9. I'm of the opinion that other than the Raider's "report with crew" capability you should never use your regular card play to report a Bajoran ship...play it for free or find it via Hidden Fighter!

#### 4. Treaties

The Bajorans have treaties with every affiliation in the game (that one can treaty with--no Ferengi, no Borg). This opens up another remarkable area of flexibility for building decks. Don't forget that Kai Winn can special download any Bajoran treaty (saving you those precious seed spots). Popular combinations are Bajoran/Federation (often with an android or Terran Empire theme); Bajoran/Dominion has been a powerful combination, with the founders supplementing the Bajorans quite nicely (in the bag, is a powerful way to get the founders to the Alpha Quadrant without running back and forth). A new combination since Trouble with Tribbles is the interesting Bajoran/Cardassian deck. There is a lot of potential that can be drawn from this seemingly contradictory pairing. Both affiliations can take full advantage of the two regions they are centered in; there is a natural overlap of personnel who play for free--the Cardassians have lots of Officer Guls and some needed security, the Bajorans have three scientists. Focused regions, overlapping missions, complimentary free reports, make this a potentially amazing combination. Bajoran/Romulan decks can also be worked quite nicely.

As with any deck, however, if you are working on building a Bajoran treaty deck you should focus it as much as possible. Focused mission requirements, redundant personnel who can punch through dilemmas, and a good back-up plan if something goes awry are always good principals to build a deck around.

#### 5. Oddities

Without spending too much time on some of the more unusual features of the Bajoran affiliation, I'd like to mention three possible decks that can be a lot of fun. Neither has been done (as far as I am aware) to a level of efficiency to make them tournament worthy, but both can be a hoot!

a. The Dal'Rok deck

The premise of this deck is to utilize the Orb Fragment artifact to spread Dal'Roks across the galaxy. Typical orb fetching applies (HQ: Return Orbs to Bajor) then get to the position you want to play Dal'Rok like an event, and let her rip. This deck is best used in combination with mechanisms that slow down the reporting capacity of your opponent...Anti-Time Anomaly, for example. And it can definitely be a major annoyance factor.

b. Zayra and the Hate Crime deck

Zayra has a unique special skill that allows him to play the dilemma "Hate Crime" as an interrupt where present. Hate Crime targets personnel who are the only member of their species present and prevents them from using their skills for three turns. While not as powerful as, say, a swarm of rogue Borg, it can easily be combined with other "fate worse than death" dilemmas, like Trauma. Slowing down one's opponent is always a good thing. Also, Zayra's skills (Civilian with Transporter Skill) fit very well into a Bajoran Dual-Icon deck, and his archaeology can help with a Bajoran DNA deck...unusual, but certainly feasible.

E. The archetypes

Here are quick looks at the prevailing Bajoran archetypes...these are not actual decks, but examples of combining the principals and ideas discussed in the above sections, and ideas to help you focus on building a good, tournament worthy Bajoran deck. Some of these ideas can be combined--for example, most decks can benefit by a few self-seeded bonus points, collecting an orb for points, card draws, and (at the shrine) deck manipulation. And, this list is by no means exhaustive. The Mirror, Mirror has opened up even more possibilities for the Bajoran affiliation--a whole "Mirror Quadrant" to explore and exploit and return orbs in!

1. Orbs

"The Orb" deck focuses not necessarily on using the orbs to assist in helping other decks (although, they certainly **DO** help) but by becoming the basis of a quick bonus points driven, themed deck. Four orbs--Orb Fragment, Orb of Prophecy and Change, Orb of Wisdom, and the Orb of Time--can be collected quickly with the objective HQ: Return Orbs to Bajor, then returned for points and draws. Two missions, Orb Negotiations and Characterize Neutrino Emissions, override the normal artifact rules by allowing multiple orbs to seed. You build this deck by stocking all of the orbs at one of these missions and a smattering of bonus points (if at Orb Negotiations, I recommend using a self-seeded Barclay's Protomorphosis



Disease and a Sarjenka, for fifteen points--Orb Negotiations is great because any of the Orb Icon personnel can solve the mission outright!). Note, while one HQ:ROTB allows you to draw cards for each orb, you need one copy of the objective PER orb to score the points. Four Orbs, equals 40 points. Kivas Fajo scores five points for each artifact for another 20 points. Barclay's and a Sarjenka are another 15 points. While MUCH riskier with the addition of the Writ of Accountability, the Bajorans can easily Q-Bypass the mission and solve it outright for another 35 points--although it shouldn't be too difficult to solve on its own. You can also add the Phoenix for another quick 10 points. If you are forced to solve missions, missions that Kira Nerys can solve easily are a huge benefit (since she has the orb icon). The downside to this type of deck is increased after the referee icon mechanic: your opponent has easy access to cards like the Big Picture, Intermix Ratio, and the Writ. The deck is also very seed intensive--you want to maximize your remaining seed space by using good delaying tactics. It's still a viable deck-type, in and of itself...but I believe you can make better use of the orb techniques by supporting and supplementing other deck types, not in making it a viable deck by itself.

The Mirror Universe has made this deck even easier with a SECOND Bajor that you can return orbs to. Add a Multidimensional Transporter Device and you don't even need to fly through the wormhole. Just grab your orbs in one quadrant and return them to the other.

A sub-type of this deck is the "Mysterious Orb"/deprivation deck. Here, you focus your dilemmas (and battle bridge side deck) on removing and requiring a single skill--Science is the most common. The Unscientific Method/Scientific Method combo works particularly well. You combine a few Mysterious Orbs (which seed at space missions and be acquired, although not returned to Bajor, with the HQ:ROTB objective) which can further deprive your opponent of key skills (I recommend depositing them on a landed ship someplace). The deck can also work to deprive your opponent of officers (Hazardous Duty and Maglock both require officers). This type of focused deprivation can be quite effective at forcing a lockdown and preventing your opponent from scoring the points needed to win the game.

## 2. Regional and focused mission solving

This deck type, a basic Bajoran Mission solver, is perhaps the most common and effective Bajoran deck that exists. The deck is built by selecting those missions that can be solved very quickly by one or two people...Orb Negotiations, Investigate Coup, etc. (See One-person mission solving above), and by maximizing the advantages of the Bajoran Region, and Deep Space 9. ASP, Defend Homeworld, and specific Ops downloads are used to access the critical people needed to overcome a dilemma or solve a mission. When combined with

the various free reporting mechanisms, an orb, and other Bajoran techniques it is amazingly effective. The key to this deck is building it small and fast--focusing on punching through dilemmas to solve missions. Renewal Scrolls can be a very effective way to burn through the deck to get at what you need.

A subtheme of this deck is the Bajoran "treachery" deck--focusing your personnel on the various Treacherous Bajorans (Jaro Essa, Vedek or Kai Winn, The Indendant, Colonel Day, Riker Wil, etc.) to assault missions that require treachery (Relocate Settlers, Search for Weapons, etc.) Again, focused missions with focused personnel are the key to its success. The Art of Diplomacy can help a treacherous deck...the Bajorans have the most Resistance Personnel in the game, and treachery is something they aren't lacking.

### 3. "The Earring Deck"

The "Earring Deck" focuses on two goals: acquiring the artifact "The Earring of Li Nalas" and then solving the mission Rescue Prisoners where Nalas has been seeded to turn a 25 point mission into a 50 point mission. The artifact is often acquired by solving a Q's planet. Another way to find the "Earring" is by solving a mission where you can utilize the artifact Starry Night--download TWO use as equipment artifacts (orbs anyone!)

This type of deck can be further focused on using the 12 Bajoran Personnel with the skill of Resistance. They possess every normal classification (minus VIP) and can take advantage of enhancements like "HQ: War Room" (strength boost which helps solve Rescue Prisoners more easily). Other missions that often assist an "Earring Deck" are Verify Evidence (which either Kasidy Yates or Razka Karn and a tricorder can solve alone) or Acquire Illicit Explosives.

Bajoran Civil War has long had the ability to download two universal resistance personnel, but only recently have we HAD such a personnel. Enter, Gantt: a rare AU Bajoran with Medical and resistance. Quite a fun combination and welcome addition.

### 4. "Pire for Hire"

This is the Bajoran Armada deck--which is remarkably easy to do! The premise here is to get as many ships and weapons as possible aimed at your opponent. The simplest way for the Bajorans to do this is to utilize the amazing ability of the pilot: "Rinnak Pire"--who is the matching commander of ANY universal Bajoran ship--and wait--ALL Bajoran ships are universal. There are several mechanisms to getting these into play quickly; the most effective is the Event Bajoran Civil War, which let's you download two universal officers for the price of one card play (two Pires). Hidden Fighters can be used to accumulate Bajoran Interceptors quickly. Another method is to use the Bajoran Raider's ability to report with two crew members (Pires?). A third is to utilize the downloading power of RRD and

Ops. You can download an Interceptor to the Docking Pads, and then use a Ready Room Door to download its captain (Pire!). Captains Log and Defiant Dedication plaque of course help this tremendously--but don't overlook the Battle Bridge Side Deck with the potent Bajoran Tactic "Bajoran Phaser Banks"--an additional +2 to attack and defense just for using the powerful Pire. This deck type **did** take a serious hit in Tribbles with the Obelisk of Masaka, which forces you to load an additional crew member onto the Bajoran Interceptor...but it is still quite viable.

Don't forget the Bajoran Warship either. This big AU Bajoran beastie might not be the easiest to use, but the Bajorans can now access the speed and power of the STP drop. Pile on the Gantt's, and non-aligned AU personnel, such as the First Contact Vulcans, Thomas Paris, Garak, Ajur, and Boratas, and you can quickly and cheaply get a big jump on the armada building. With the Emblem of the Empire and a Federation/Bajoran Treaty you have access to all the wonderful skills and downloads of the OS Terran Empire folk, and without the Federation attack restrictions!

Or the Alliance Interceptor. While not my favorite Bajoran ship (it takes an Empire staffing icon) it has more weapons than its Alpha Quadrant counterpart. While it cannot be downloaded by hidden fighter, it retains its landing capacity for planet hopping.

Missions that go well with this deck (after all, you do need to solve points) include the rarely used Test Propulsion Systems --which in addition to Pire requires an Engineer and physics (although four Bajorans have exactly that combination of skills-- Vedek Dax, Tahna Los, Rom, and Anara (SP)). Another good mission is Study Badlands--which fits perfectly with Minister Rozahn. Both of these missions are universal; multiple Pires, Anaras, and Minister Rozahns (also all universal!) are all you need. Going with this combination of people and missions require NO rare cards! A cheap deck that newer players can often build easily.

## 5. Gamma Colony and the Emissary

This archetype is built around the Gamma quadrant mission "Colony Preparations" and the Emissary's ability to report people directly to him. The premise is easy enough--solve colony prep, download the colony, and report more Bajorans (which mean more points!) directly to the emissary at the colony.

One variation is to use a Bajoran/Klingon treaty and report to the end of the Gamma Spaceline the IKC T'Ong. This uncommon ship from the Q-continuum can report with up to three personnel--one card play with lots of results! Ferry the crew (which should include The Emissary) to a Colony prep and go nuts. STP the ship to hand and then re-report with more reinforcements. An advantage to this deck is that it can be built without any facilities, and be based entirely in the Gamma Quadrant. You can also confuse your opponent by using the Dominion

Facility Primary Supply Depot, Assign Mission Specialists for two non-aligned personnel (Narik, Farek or the Civilian Kathleen Tonell) and three pieces of equipment to help in solving the mission. A gamma-only deck with a Dominion facility that turns out to be entirely Bajoran and Klingon!!

#### 6. Riker Wil--PNZ, Symbiont Diagnosis, Diplomacy/Anthropology themes

Another fun trick the Bajorans have up their sleeves can be found on Riker Wil. Riker Wil (downloadable via Defend Homeworld) adds a Bajoran icon to any mission with a Federation Icon. This vastly increases the possibilities for the Bajorans creating a way to disguise a Bajoran deck as another affiliation. Bajoran PNZ becomes possible--the bonus that the Bajoran Interceptor gets works just fine in the "Neutral Zone Region!". Apply standard PNZ tricks (Isabella, Temporal Rift, etc.). However, something that the Bajorans have going for them is in Defense--a landed Interceptor on a PNZ planet still counts as an opposing ship in the Neutral Zone--and is a LOT harder than an orbiting ship to get rid of.

Riker Wil and Vedek Dax can team up to make Symbiont Diagnosis accessible to the Bajorans; and the various federation diplomacy missions suddenly become a viable option as well. Again, when building a deck around this feature, I'd recommend a good focus on easily accessible skills. Anthropology, for example. Four of the eight Bajorans with Anthropology play for free! The fifth, can be downloaded via ASP, and a sixth (Gantt) can be downloaded in duplicate with Bajoran Civil War. Symbiont Diagnosis, Homeward, and Cultural Observation all LOOK Federation, but can be the theme of a Riker Wil, Vedek Dax based Bajoran deck--surprise!

#### 7. Badlands Region

Three missions: Study Badlands, Search and Rescue (universal), and Verify Evidence can all be solved by the Bajorans--all require Navigation x2 (in addition to other skills)...the Bajorans have three personnel with Navigation x2 on them, and eight other personnel with navigation x1...the objective Navigate Plasma Storms can damage and destroy ships that don't have enough navigation on them...Cytherians can force your opponent to venture through the region...are you sensing a theme??

Build this deck around accumulating lots of navigation and solving those focused missions, while simultaneously forcing your opponent to venture through the badlands. Since the region seeds together, it can often be used to force your opponent's missions to be seeded at opposite ends of the spaceline. Be careful NOT to include many events in your draw deck (because you want to keep the objective flaring up to crush your opponent). It's a little more risky, but very potent as both an offensive and defensively focused deck.

Search for Rebels adds another Badlands mission, albeit in the Mirror Badlands Region, but it is a mission that the Bajorans can easily access. The Intendant and Overseer Odo might be just the dynamic duo to dominate this deck.

#### 8. Dual Icon fun!

Two dual icon missions (Deliver Supplies and Runabout Search) can be attempted by the Bajorans--both require Transporter Skill. A deck deriving card draws with Kasidy Yates at the helm of a freighter can quickly become the lynchpin for this deck type, since Kasidy is named as a possible requirement on Deliver Supplies and has the Transporter Skill for Runabout Search. Combine with some non-aligned help--Altovar, the mission specialist Dr. Farek, and The Albino--all have the Medical and Greed half of the Runabout search requirement. This deck has gained in usefulness since the ruling preventing the Borg from scoring two objectives off the same mission; and for even more protection, seed a Defensive Measures to help thwart the possibility of mission theft. The dual icon missions can form an easily focused deck (with HIGH mission points) and (like most Bajoran decks) can be born of just of few personnel.

#### 9. Defend Homeworld: The Mega Download

While I definitely do not endorse this deck, it is worth mentioning as a potential Bajoran archetype. This deck utilized the massive downloading capacity of Defend Homeworld. The deck is built by forcing your opponent to attack you at your home world, where you can retaliate by downloading most of your deck to assist in mission solving. To activate this download, the most foolproof method is to use a Mysterious Orb (yep, another use of the orbs) to whisk an opponent to one of your landed ships on Bajor. Ops download (or use a second copy of Defend Home world to get) Kira Nerys. Acquire the orb through HQ: Return Orbs to Bajor, tenting for it if necessary. A hidden fighter will get you a landed interceptor or raider. Seed under all of your opponent's missions a Q-flash, and stock your continuum with mostly The Issue is Patriotism. When your opponent attempts a mission, they will hit the flash, hit TIIP and be forced to attack you using the personnel trapped inside one of your landed ships. You can then download all you need to win rapidly by muscling your way through dilemmas and solving missions. A treaty, giving you access to even more personnel and weapons, can further enhance the deck.

#### Conclusion:

Hopefully, this guide to the Bajorans will help the prophets guide you to victory. With the right focus, a bit of creativity and good game play, the Bajorans are one of the strongest affiliations in the game today. Bill Chien used them to win the World Championship a couple of years ago, and this year, they were represented in the top three. The potential the Bajorans have is unmatched by any affiliation in the ease of getting the key people into play quickly, punching through dilemmas that might slow you down, and

manipulating both your card draws and card plays. While the Cardassians may have occupied Bajor in the past, in the present, clearly, the light of the prophets has shined brightly on the Bajoran people.

Your 'Pah is Strong!!

### **Affiliation Overview: Cardassians**

"After a century of occupations the Cardassians' extensive mining operation had exhausted the planet's resources, and the conquerors had wearied of the decades-long struggle against Bajoran terrorists. They had departed - but not without first poisoning the wells and scorching the ground, leaving behind a wasteland whose inhabitants were forced to turn to the Federation for help." - J.M. Dillard, "Emissary"

Section by Fritz Meissner

This paragraph sums up the Cardassians. Whatever your reason for wanting to play Cardassian, be it that your girlfriend likes the color purple, or you just want to play the bad guys, you've made a great choice. The Cardassians can be fun to play and also win games.

#### **I. WHY CARDASSIANS?**

1. Universal Cardassian Nors - the Cardassians are the only affiliation with access to universal Nors. The Terran Empire, Klingon/Cardassian Alliance, and Bajorans have access to Mirror Terok Nor and Deep Space Nine, while others must rely on Empok Nor if they want to take advantage of the great downloads and extra card draws offered by these stations. These unique stations are often used, which means that if you're using them, you might be faced with thousands of bloodthirsty Klingons or Jem'Hadar who also want the station.
2. Eighteen Cardassians can report to Central Command for free and five for free with Emblem of the Alliance.
3. Ore Processing is the only consistent method of drawing cards on the same turn as you play a card or take an action which requires you to give up your card draw. If you're using one of the Mirror Universe Nors, you don't even have to worry about Reactor Overload.
4. Freighters and transports aren't something the Cardassians have a shortage of. They can report for free to Docking Ports, can be used to complete Cargo Runs and even be used in battle - a couple of quick System 5 Disruptors, and there's your armada.

#### **II. CARDASSIAN CONCEPTS**

##### **1. NORS**

Nors offer significant advantages to the players who control them. There are five available to the Cardassians - Terok Nor, Mirror Terok Nor, Empok Nor, Alliance Nor and Nor. Of these, my favorites are the universal Nors - which you choose depends on your needs. The Alliance Nor is great for Ore Processing as it allows you to avoid Reactor Overload with Emblem of the Alliance, and your non-Cardassian Alliance personnel can mix with your Cardassians. However, the effort it takes to get to the Alpha Quadrant might not be worth the effort, and there are only two mirror universe missions which can be attempted by the Cardassians.

A combination of the two is often best. That way, you can take advantage of Reactor Overload-proof Ore Processing at the Alliance Nor as well as having the best of personnel and missions to choose from.

### PICKING SITES

This is, of course, an essential step in using a Nor. First off, you'll need a docking site so as to move your personnel on and off the station aboard ships. Only a few Cardassian ships have more than two staffing icons, and those can't report to the nor anyway, so you're unlikely to want Docking Pylons. The trade off between the Docking Ports and Docking Pads is between defense and speed: Your opponent is less likely to be able to dock at Docking Pads, but your larger, faster ships can only dock at the Ports. Remember also that freighters and transports can report for free to the Docking Ports.

An Ore Processing Unit is essential for the Cardassians - there just isn't a reason not to include it. Also of great power is Ops. With it, you can download cards to any site where they may be played. Ops also allows you to report OFFICER classification personnel. Security Office, Science Lab, Infirmary, Guest Quarters and Promenade Shops allow you to report SECURITY, SCIENCE, MEDICAL, VIP or CIVILIAN classification personnel respectively. Cargo Bay is another good site, allowing you to draw a large number of cards in a single turn. Unfortunately, the Cardassians lack good equipment or "plays as equipment" artifacts like the Bajorans. Quark's Bar can be useful, with Morn allowing extra card draws. Unfortunately, it only seeds at Terok Nor. The other sites - Commander's Office, Garak's Tailor Shop and Security Holding Cell are of limited use, when taking into consideration the fact that there are only six seed slots available for sites.

My favorite six are Ops, Ore Processing Unit, Security Office, Infirmary, Science Lab and the Docking Ports. Sometimes I might swap the Ports out in favor of Docking Pads if I'm worried about defending the station, but that's usually how it stays. This choice allows me to report or download OFFICER, ENGINEER, SECURITY, MEDICAL and SCIENCE personnel, as well as being able to report, dock and undock all of my Cardassian ships and report freighters and transports for free. Any VIPs or CIVILIANS that I need can report to Central Command, and some, like Legate Damar, play for free.

### DEFENDING YOUR STATION

Your Nor can be commandeered by your opponent. That's a liability which a quick-thinking opponent might spend a few turns trying to take advantage of. You don't want your opponent starving you of personnel by taking over your station.

You can start your defense strategy by leaving out sites which allow your opponent to report regardless of affiliation - Guest Quarters and Promenade shops. If you want to go one step further, use Docking Pads as your site, which will prevent your opponent from using his larger ships. Unfortunately, there's only one Cardassian ship without any staffing icons (Cardassian Shuttle), and it suffers from very low attributes. If you want to make absolutely sure that your opponent can't commandeer the station, don't use Ops. This may sound stupid, as it'll cut off your downloads and stop you from reporting OFFICERS, but your station can't be commandeered without the site. However, many players stock Ops even if they aren't using a station, just to be sure of being able to commandeer an opponent's Nor.

You won't always be able to keep your opponent's personnel off your station, so be prepared to handle personnel battle. Your hand weapons play for free if you have Weapons Locker at the Security Office. Personnel who are accompanied by a SECURITY personnel may move anywhere on the station in response to an attack. Sisko 197 Subroutine also prevents any player from commandeering the station, and there's nothing stopping you from playing Automated Security System on your Ops - it won't kill your Cardassians. Finally, if your Cardassian-playing opponent decides to try crowding you out of your own station, HQ: Defensive Measures allows your Obsidian Order personnel to initiate battle against other Cardassians.

## 2. DELAY

There are several cards which can be used to delay opponents. Most are interrupts which incur no penalty to the user besides the draw deck space necessary to stock them, and the card draws which could have been used for other cards. They have the added advantage of being drawn free if you probe them for the Shops. If you're going to use your card play, make sure that it delays your opponent for more than one turn. The real trick with delay mechanics is to pick those that will affect as many different types of decks as possible, will have greatest effect and are least easily countered.

The most obvious way of slowing opponents is, of course, more dilemmas. By cutting out all the extra seed cards that you put in for speed or delay, you can seed more dilemmas. Obviously, it isn't possible to cover dilemma combinations in this article, but you'll find that elsewhere in this guide. Here are some other possible ways:

### Rogue Borg Mercenaries

Pros: Can stop a ship's crew for an entire turn without using up your card play

Cons: Easily countered by Reactor Overload, Intruder Forcefield and others

### Wormhole



Pros: Wormhole your opponent to a different time location or another quadrant - anywhere where there isn't much he can do; one pair of wormholes can affect opponent for multiple turns

Cons: Operate Wormhole Relays can be seeded or downloaded by Q the Referee

#### Brain Drain

Pros: Drain your opponent's personnel of their skills when they need them most

Cons: Countered by the Writ of Accountability - you don't really want to lose the game, do you?

#### Barclay's Transporter Phobia

Pros: Stop your opponent's personnel from beaming

Cons: Most decks can land ships; doesn't prevent personnel from attempting space missions

#### Docking Procedures

Pros: Many decks must dock and undock ships at facilities; one card stops crew for entire turn; no counter

Cons: Borg decks don't often have to dock\undock; only works once per docking attempt

#### Loss of Orbital Stability

Pros: One card prevents movement for entire turn; can destroy ships with very low shields; no counter

Cons: Requires opponent's ships to have stopped at a planet; doesn't stop crew from attempting mission\beaming onto a new ship

#### Anti-Beaming Cards (Distortion Field, Particle Scattering Device etc.)

Pros: One card play can slow opponent by several turns

Cons: No guarantee that opponents will need to attempt planet missions; takes card plays

#### Thought Fire

Pros: Powerful in conjunction with Brain Drain

Cons: Brain Drain limited by Writ of Accountability; Traveler: Transcendence gives opponent extra draws; no effect if opponent has IP Scanner; takes six seed slots

#### Tribbles

Pros: Takes only one seed slot; Large denominations can cause problems

Cons: Larger denominations need several turns to enter play

#### Point Denial

Pros: Combining Hero of the Empire and Destroy Radioactive Garbage Scow can force your opponent to solve more mission than planned, and absolutely destroy one-mission win decks.

Cons: Hero of the Empire takes three turns to go off; Borg decks aren't affected

#### Tantalus Field

Pros: Kill personnel at will

Cons: Must be earned or downloaded by James Tiberius Kirk; requires a Mirror Quadrant ship; no guarantee of not discarding something vital

Make your choice carefully. If no one in your area has used Rogue Borg Mercenaries for a while, people might start to drop Intruder Force Field\Alert from their decks. If you see this happening, it's your chance to cash in on others' folly. Another idea is to use two (or more) different delay mechanics in one deck. For instance, if your opponent sees you playing multiples of Barclay's Transporter Phobia and docks his ships to let personnel walk from one ship to another instead of beaming, you can delay him for another turn using Docking Procedures. You can always discard those cards which your opponent can easily counter to ore processing and draw more cards.

### 3. PARANOIA

With the release of Trouble with Tribbles comes an interesting alternative to speed and delay: paranoia. Q the Referee allows Referee icon cards to play for free, lets you discard one per turn to draw another card, or gives you the option of discarding the incident to download a referee icon card. It also gives certain pre-Dominion cards a referee icon while it is in play.

As players often take the risk of abusing strategies which can be countered by referee icon cards, you can delay a large percentage of your opponents by using as many magic bullets (Any cards which were designed with the specific aim of stopping abusive strategies) as possible. With Ore Processing, you don't even have to worry too much about lost card draws. Another advantage of paranoia over delay is that you're unlikely to need more than one of the same bullet per game, so you can stock just one of each in your Q's Tent and download them as needs be with Q the Referee. You might not even need to stock any Q's Tents in your draw deck, leaving you free to draw other, more useful cards.

The best magic bullets to use are the broad spectrum counters, such as Intermix Ratio, which will stop a large number of bonus point abuses in their tracks - from Colony to Ressian Flute decks. Another great one is Scorched Hand, which can be downloaded by It's Only A Game as well as Q the Referee. You can even abuse its power by playing Kivas Fajo - Collector on your opponent to allow you to download it with It's Only a Game.

The point of paranoia, however, is to use not one, but as many as possible of the bullets available. If you compare paranoia to delay, you might devote ten or more slots of your draw deck to delay. Consider doing the same with paranoia.

### 4. SPEED

Ore Processing is a great way of drawing cards. Combined with Guest Quarters, Cargo Bay, Promenade Shops, 35th Rule, 34th Rule or even good old The Traveler: Transcendence or Kivas Fajo - Collector you can easily be drawing five or more cards per turn. With Emblem of the Alliance and Crossover you can report your Alliance personnel for free to the Alpha Quadrant, and Central Command gives you another

source of free reports. Unfortunately, there are no Cardassian mission specialists (although you could use non-aligned personnel), but you can still benefit from the other jump start cards - Assign Support Personnel, Homefront, Quark's Isolinear Rods and Defend Homeworld.

This set of card draws and free plays rivals those of any other affiliation, and they often won't have the backups of your Nors to help out in emergencies when specific personnel are needed to overcome a dilemma.

### III. DECK THEMES

If you're building a competitive deck, you must approach it as if there is a problem which you need to solve. The problem is your opponents' decks. Most often, the major problems are the dilemmas which they'll seed.

There are a number of solutions:

- (1) reduce the number of dilemmas you need to face
- (2) find a way of nullifying these dilemmas
- (3) ensure that you'll always have a way of passing them, or
- (4) find a way of not having to worry about the consequences of these dilemmas.

Bonus point decks or Hero of the Empire decks use method (1) - by increasing the number of points which can be earned by solving each mission, you'll need to solve fewer missions. The best of these decks need solve only one mission to win, thus limiting the total number of dilemmas which have to be encountered to as few as three or four. The most abusive decks of this type are those which don't have to solve any missions at all. Senior Staff Meeting is an example of method (2). Nullifying even one dilemma in any combination makes life a lot easier. Any deck which gets lots of personnel into play quickly or uses equipment or other cards to add skills to personnel uses method (3). The final method works by allowing the opponents' dilemmas to do their worst, and either having enough personnel to survive the chaos or being able to report new personnel and carry on exactly as before. Genetronic Replicator is one way of nullifying the effects of dilemmas. Most decks employ this technique by using multiple personnel with overlap of skills so that if one away team or crew gets killed, a new set of personnel can be reported and the game can continue.

Many decks use all four of the above techniques to a limited extent. The best deck builders might focus on one of these methods and try to "break" it. An example of an attempt at "breaking" method (4) is to use multiples of one universal mission which can be solved using multiples of one universal personnel. For instance, five copies of Vekor plus one appropriately affiliated personnel can solve Botanical Research.

Obviously, each affiliation is stronger with some techniques than others. The Cardassians can be used for reliable Hero of the Empire decks, which use mainly method (1), but like all good decks, splash in method (3) as well.

Another great Cardassian idea is to use Genetronic Replicator and Scans (which can unfortunately be easily nullified by Panel Overload) in conjunction with the Ops downloads available from Nors which will allow you to pick and choose personnel best suited to overcoming the dilemmas your opponent has seeded. Obviously, this is a great extension to technique (3) above.

Method (4) is something which many players agree to be the way of the future. Because of dilemmas becoming so tough to pass as to make it not worthwhile proofing your megacrews from them, it appears that smaller, expendable away teams of five to seven personnel are needed. The Cardassians again excel here, because of the Ops downloads, which will let them pick and choose their personnel. The interrupt Extraordinary Methods can help out here by keeping your personnel alive just one more turn to overcome that last wall and solve the mission.

The Cardassians can also speed their way through dilemmas with the free plays provided by Docking Ports, Central Command and Emblem of the Alliance. This is the most obvious way of using method (3). However, it is not necessarily the best advised of courses, because the Cardassians can't often match the speed of other affiliations in this way.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

It's flexibility that makes the Cardassians the great affiliation they are. From battle, to dedicated speed, to delay - perhaps not as fast as some, but certainly more reliably than most. As a good all around, low risk option, the Cardassians shine through.

### **Affiliation Overview: Dominion**

#### **The Dominion: Brute Force and Subterfuge Rolled Into One.**

By Brian Sykes

Of the eight major affiliations in ST:CCG, the Dominion is probably the least used and most difficult to play (with the Borg as one possible exception). However, they really are one of the most versatile affiliations. If you like to battle, both the Dominion ships and the Dominion personnel are very well suited to commence a beatdown. If mission solving is more your style, they are surprisingly good at dilemma-busting. If you like to slow down your opponent while you set your plan up, the Dominion infiltrators can cause your opponent fits. And as far as speed goes, the Dominion has more ways to get people in for free than any other affiliation, and can back it up with card draws to boot. However, they do have their limitations. Let's start this article by breaking down the strengths and weaknesses of this monster affiliation.

#### **Strengths of the Dominion**

The Dominion has several very key assets to its design and those assets can lead to some very powerful deck archetypes. The first thing is their speed. They have ten Personnel that report for free to The Great Link. This might not look like much, but look at the personnel selection you get from just those ten: You get Dominion equivalents of Main characters from most of the major affiliations. Think of it this way: you get Kira, Odo, Martok, O'Brien, Bashir, Leyton, Krajensky, and Lovok without stuffing your deck full of treaties. Not to mention both the Founder Leader and the universal Founder, who both contribute the Essential SCIENCE skill. I would have to say that any Dominion deck you build should have the Dominion Homeworld and The Great Link included.

The rest of the Dominion personnel base comes from the "underlings" of the Dominion: The Jem'Hadar and Vorta. These two are very interdependent on one another. If you are going to use Jem'Hadar in your deck you MUST have at least 2-3 Vorta to ration the Ketracel-White. However, this does not usually pose a problem, as all of the Vorta have useful skills and can contribute to any Dominion deck. The Jem'Hadar are the "enforcers" of the Dominion. They provide the "grunt" skills that are good for passing dilemmas and solving some missions. However, their real power lies in their strength. The Jem'Hadar are beasts and can readily beat down any opposition they come across. On the other hand, the Dominion is not without its weaknesses. We'll take a look at some of their drawbacks.

### **Weaknesses of the Dominion**

The Dominion affiliation, while powerful, does have some serious drawbacks. The first and foremost of these has to be the Jem'Hadar addiction to Ketracel-White. Basically, if you run out of this good stuff before making it back to your supply depot, your Jemmies go crazy and start killing each other and dying off. One of the simple solutions to this problem is to not play with Jemmies in your deck, thus removing the need for white. However, this does remove some power and key skills from your deck. Vorta-Founder decks, while workable, do have some holes in them. Most people who play this deck end up using a treaty with another affiliation, with the Cardassians being the most popular, as they have plenty of Security and high-strength personnel to compensate for the loss of the Jem'Hadar. That leads me to the second weakness of the Dominion: Quadrant Separation. Now, some people (including myself) see quadrant separation as a strength, but it can also be a huge hindrance and is one of the biggest double-edged swords in the Star Trek CCG universe. For an example of this, consider the following:

If you run a gamma-based mission-solving deck, and you are playing against an armada deck that is based in the alpha quadrant, you are at an advantage because in a non-interactive game, mission solvers have an advantage over armadas. On the other hand, if your opponent is running a Patrol Neutral Zone deck, a non-interactive game could leave you in the dust.

In addition, the Dominion have very few missions they can solve unaided in the gamma quadrant, so moving between quadrants could cost you a precious turn in a close game. Not to mention that if you do use a treaty, you have to report your personnel in

their native quadrant, thus dividing your forces and slowing you down while you consolidate and set up for mission attempts.

Some popular Dominion decks, which will be covered more in the first supplement, are:

Colony Subjugation  
Smackdown  
Deyos/Gamma solver  
Captured/Prisoner Exchange/DD solver

### **Affiliation Overview: Ferengi**

**"Every once in a while, declare peace. It confuses the hell out of your enemies."**

By Ted Witt

....ahhh. The sweet glow of Latinum; the lure of profits...I can feel it in my lobes! Our guide to the Ferengi on ST:CCG may not be as complete as the 200+ Rules of acquisition. And this section is no marketing ploy! Like those "Rules", I hope you find this tour profitable to your game play, and filled with hidden gems.

Rule of Acquisition #4: Ferengi are funny!

With fun lore, gender-bending identities, silly lobes and costumes, and drink serving luscious ladies...the Ferengi have some of the most...interesting...personnel in the game. Any exploration of the trades and transactions of the Ferengi needs to start with their most important resource--their personnel.

Rule of Acquisition #13: Ferengi are Fun!

No other affiliation in ST:CCG is quite like the Ferengi. Our orange friends are not particularly battle worthy; they aren't dilemma-busting madmen; they don't work well with other affiliations; and they definitely don't assimilate! But they do acquire. They Bribe. They establish trade routes. They lust for latinum. The Ferengi have more tricks than a Risian Hotel! This article will hopefully uncover more than one of the Ferengi's secrets and allow you to have more fun playing them.

Rule of Acquisition #22: Ferengi are Fast!

Until the ROA expansion, the Borg were the undisputed kings of the download...that has since changed. With a huge array of free plays to the tower of commerce, the potential to conference others into play, mission specialists, staffless ships, and Rules of acquisition, you can get more Ferengi onto staffed ships solving missions faster than any other affiliation. It isn't unusual to have 7-8 Ferengi in play on the first turn...and possibilities for many more soon. Hopefully you

will learn a few tricks to squeeze extra personnel or two into play by the time you have obtained the end of this article.

Rule of Acquisition #37: Ferengi LOVE gaining additional resources.

In addition to being able to flood the spaceline with people, the Ferengi have remarkable card engines at their disposal...with cargo runs, declaring war and peace good for business, exchanging latinum for cards, or never allowing family to stand in the way of business, you have MANY options to replenish your deck and draw the cards you need.

Rule of Acquisition #41: Ferengi are focused.

Redundant skills, repetitive mission requirements, alternative methods of solving missions--the Ferengi may not have espionage options or treaties, but they have some amazing versatility to build tight, focused decks that can score points quickly. Dabo!

Rule of Acquisition #80: Ferengi are shrewd.

Point deprivation is hot. Not only are our orange bordered friends masters of exchange, they can make some of the most potent decks that deprive your opponents of points while simultaneously protecting themselves from similar deck types. Enter, if you dare, the lucrative market of negotiating the points.

Rule of Acquisition #123: Ferengi are fearless.

Landable ships, cloakable ships, laudable squeals and Ferengi whips...the Ferengi can be both offensive and defensive when it comes to interacting with your opponent. You can run, you can hide, you can fight, and you can threaten! More options accumulate then on the floor of the Tower of Commerce. Supplementary strategies can assist the Ferengi in their economic conquest of the universe.

Rule of Acquisition #138: Ferengi are Fun. Did I mention redundancy??

So let's stop thinking like these pitiful Huooman's and acquire some knowledge!

#### **Rule #4: The people.**

There are currently (post Mirror Mirror) forty-nine Ferengi personnel...this includes, three mission specialists (Dr. Borts, Qol, and Mordoc), one support personnel (Prak), four Mirror Ferengi (the Mr.'s), a Barash illusion (Prot), and of course, the Ferengi "Mains" (Quark, Quark Son of Keldar, Brunt, Rom, Nog, Zek, et al.)

In general, the Ferengi have an abundance of certain skills that are common to their affiliation: greed, acquisition, smuggling, treachery, etc. While the typical Ferengi skills may not be the greatest for busting dilemmas in the traditional way or solving normal missions, they often have multiple skill dots (Quark has SEVEN regular skills, one special skill, and a special download).

Many have special downloads to assist getting additional resources into play (various Ferengi download everything from small cloaking devices, to prepare assault teams, bribery, and hidden fighters). Often they have special skills that can further boost their ability to acquire resources and solve missions--Ishka, for example, both doubles Zek's skills AND lets latinum play to her for free; Lumba doubles the first listed skill of universal Ferengi AND nullifies gender-related dilemmas. Lastly, many Ferengi are multi-classified: Bractor is an Officer/Scientist, Goss is Officer/Medical, Krazago is Officer/Engineer, etc. Furthermore, most Ferengi are civilians or VIPs, and thus often share a second (or in Gaila's case THIRD) classification... These special skills, multiple classifications, and downloads easily help make up for the lack of breadth that the Ferengi share...

Additionally, there are a number of other attributes and characteristics found in the lore of the Ferengi that key off other cards...

### **Rule #13: Fun...**

While the state of the metagame has balanced the affiliations considerably, making cheese a (thankfully) endangered and risky endeavor, part of this game we love has nothing to do with solving points, busting dilemmas, finding a “good day to die”, or threatening the universe with assimilation. Ever since The Next Generation where the Ferengi were **supposed** to be the new big, bads for the Federation—and the writers and viewers quickly realized that we laughed rather than feared—our feckless Ferengi were reduced to the fun factor. Decipher has not disappointed! An example: Frool smack down! That’s funny. Or Lumba running around squealing. Or the often fun consequences of triggering a Protection Racket and making outrageous requests of your opponent. Brunt, FCA!

In other ways, the Ferengi have inspired cards that see play in many, many decks. Remember the bumbling and boisterous buffoons who tried to save their Moogie from the devilish hands of the Dominion at Empok Nor? That event has been recreated in one of the most potent wall dilemmas in the game: Ferengi Infestation. Other gems abound: Lurin would have succeeded if it weren’t for those meddling kids! What a rascal.

While competing at the most serious levels of this game can be stressful, I recommend playing with the Ferengi as a fun endeavor. Enjoy!

### **Rule #22: Reporting Engines...**

While there aren't as many selections in personnel to choose from as most affiliations, the Ferengi have several fun mechanisms to ensure that you will have a sea of orange colored, large lobed personnel to score points. Let's look at them.

Tower of Commerce: Headquarters have been a staple as a reporting engine for a while, and the Ferengi are no different. Every headquarters (except the new Mirror Empire HQ) specifies a subset of "special" people that can report (once per turn) for free there. The Romulans have a HQ



for the Tal Shiar, the Dominion's Great Link specifies Founders. For the Ferengi, however, the list is very vast--any Civilians, any VIP's, and any Huprians qualify. Usually, Civilians and VIPS are not the most useful of personnel...but for the Ferengi they are essential! Both Grand Nagi, all flavors of Quark, Ishka, bartenders, and Mirror folk, the list is enormous! Since you will be using many of these personnel, including the Tower of Commerce is very beneficial.

Quark's Bar: perhaps the most useful site in the game, Quark's bar turns Deep Space Nine or Terok Nor or the Mirror versions into a second Ferengi Headquarters! Bartenders, dabo girls, waiters, and any Quarks or Roms can all report for free! And perhaps more importantly, Quark's Bar allows all Ferengi access to the station, and allows for a swarm of other important cards to key off the station: Dabo!, Credit Exchanges, Rules of Acquisition, Morn. Quark's is definitely the place to be.

Quark's Isolinear Rods: another seedable card with an important download option (to hand) can help jumpstart your Ferengi deck...non-Officers with computer skill x2. For the Ferengi, your choice is clear: Quark!! But which one? Your basic Quark from Rules (and more skill dots than you can shake a stick at!) or Quark Son of Keldar, a Klingon/Ferengi dual affiliation card, or Mr. Quark, the honorable Mirror version. All of these Quark's can play for free to the bar, so consider the Isolinear rods as a good jump-start to get your Quark in hand and into play fast.

1<sup>st</sup> Rule of Acquisition: While extremely helpful to allow latinum downloads to come from the discard pile, the first rule also allows for a once a game download of both a Gold Pressed Latinum and/or a Ferengi VIP. Since VIP's play for free to the Tower of Commerce, this useful card can get the right VIP you need early in hand...and either Grand Nagus Gint (with HIS download of any rule) or Grand Nagus Zek (and his download of HQ: Ferengi Credit Exchange) are exceptional choices. Get your Nagus in play fast...you'll need him for other important cards.

Ferengi Conference: One of the most powerful reporting engines at your disposal, to activate this objective (as your regular card play), you'll need a Nagus (see the first rule above on how to get him fast!) and a Ferengi facility (or Quark's Bar). Play this card, and download to your Nagus one Huprian (Maihar'du) or up to eleven skill dots worth of Civilians! This is an amazingly powerful download because, as Civilians already report for free to the Tower or those dabo girls, waiters, and bartenders report to Quark's, you can play civilians for free to both those places, then Conference up a swarm more...and there are ways to maximize the effectiveness of this download. First, balancing skill dots is essential--you need to get combinations of Ferengi that help you in other ways. For example, Ishka is an amazing personnel, but she has 6 skill dots...so balancing her with Gaila (five skill dots + a download of a ship via Hidden Fighter) gets you a LOT of valuable dots for low price. On the other hand, you can maximize your skill dot and get hoards of people: conference Deanna, 2 dots (half of the Trois...and Lwaxanna comes along for the ride!) and Jake, 3 dots (half of Jake and Nog...and Nog comes along for the ride!), Lumba, 4 dots (and a special download of Nilva). In this particular download you've only used 9 of 11 skill dots but you've ended up with: Acquisition x2, Youth x2, Empathy x3, Diplomacy x2, Greed, Leadership, FCA, Engineer, and Biology x3. Not to mention a total integrity of 33, cunning of 40, and strength of 19 from ONE card play!!

Ishka: one simple special skill: your Latinum may report here, for free! Instant free access to as much Latinum as you can stock in your deck (and draw into your hand!). But while Latinum is amazing in itself for equipment downloads, a better choice is to combine with HQ: Ferengi Credit Exchange--which lets you discard up to three GPL each turn for the following options: either simply score points (2 per GPL), draw a card, or return a card in your discard pile to the bottom of your draw deck. Since each option is triggered per piece of Latinum, the more you can report (for free!) the more options you have.

Frool: one simple special skill: Reports for free to Ferengi Trading Post. Use the trading post and report as many Frools as you can draw! Instant Ferengi cannon fodder...or accumulate attributes...just remember to use LOTS of Frools.

Writ of Accountability: once per game downloads an FCA personnel! Seed one (or perhaps for more flexibility stock two in your draw deck and seed a couple of Q the Ref's) and download Brunt, who (if someone is using a smidge of cheese) can download the writ for its game balancing, cheese prevention. But the first purpose can be used simply to download an FCA personnel! Nilva, as another FCA Ferengi, also qualifies. And don't forget that either can be downloaded into a Guest Quarters to further deck manipulation and control. Even if you are NOT playing the Ferengi as a primary affiliation, it might be worth including in many decks just to have access to the cheese ending power of the Writ.

AMS: All affiliations that had **some** prominent role (minus the Borg) on the Next Generation have mission specialists. And while our exploration into Ferengi culture was most heavily shown on Deep Space Nine, our orange friends can jumpstart with the choice of three Mission specialists: Dr. Borts, a double classification Science/Medical combo; Qol, a Scientist by classification, exobiologist by skill; and Mordoc, Security/astrophysicist. Unfortunately, none of these skill will be particularly helpful in scoring lots of bonus points (astrophysics shows up on Purchase Moon), they will help power your way through dilemmas. And with the flexibility of Ferengi Trading Post you won't need to fear the cost of a seed spot (for an outpost) to use AMS. But don't forget about the non-aligned Ferengi from premiere: Dr. Farek's Medical/Greed might easily fuel a few bonus points!

ASP: Fewer options (although not a bad choice!): Prak (Officer, Navigation, Stellar cartography). What's important here is the officer. The Ferengi have few mechanisms to get officers into play quickly. And don't forget about the non-aligned support personnel...an option that isn't often used but can work wonders in a Ferengi deck is Danderdag! We look for things, things to make us go...the Ferengi like looking for things too...consider acquiring useful things with some Pakled help. Other possibilities include the empaths Maques and Gem: both have high integrity (which you might need) and the useful Empathy to circumvent some nasty dilemmas.

Defend Homeworld: the Security download has really jumpstarted a lot of decks...and the Ferengi can benefit equally. There are several good choices to choose from, the most common being Maihar'du (who in turn downloads the Scepter of the Grand Nagus which will very much assist your management of the Rules of Acquisition). Other choices include one of my favorites: Berik...another rare Officer and he also has the rare skill of Leadership. Leck's assassination skill might provide a bit of fun. Gaila is another exceptional choice providing both Engineer and

a special download of Hidden Fighter, which will in turn get you a quick ship. Non-aligned options such as Lore or Roga Danar can also assist in the jump-start strategy.

By combining these jump starts, it is quite possible to have accumulated 8 or 9 Ferengi (and possibly a great deal more) on your first turn and with a minimum of luck looking for a specific card draw... No other affiliation can match the sheer power of the Ferengi for personnel reporting!

### **Rule #37: Card Engines...**

Cargo Runs: While other affiliations can also run cargo, the Ferengi have a distinct advantage in that any of their ships can haul the loot to the cargo bay (as opposed to just a freighter or transport) and, in my opinion, perhaps the most important distinctly Ferengi feature, easy access to equipment cards via Gold Pressed Latinum and the mysterious Self-Sealing Stem Bolts. Quark's Bar helps set up the exchange (and since you'll probably be using it anyway, you might as well run latinum, exchange it into something more useful, and run back to the Tower of Commerce (for example). Ishka lets latinum play for free, so report it, exchange it, and run it for card draws. Other ideas include using the Scepter of the Grand Nagus (useful in its own right) as part of a cargo run if you are shuttling your Nagus to Quark's for a conference... The buying and selling of goods (at a tidy profit, of course) is what the Ferengi do best!

Morn: have him sit at the bar, draw a card! Can't beat a special skill like that...or can you? Great dilemma busting skills, a special download of latinum, the acquisition to run cargo by himself? Not bad...but perhaps best is to have him sit at the bar and fuel your deck.

Guest Quarters and Promenade Shops: while we are on the subject of using Nors to draw cards, I would be remiss if I didn't mention two other sites that your Ferengi can easily access. Guest Quarters isn't a card engine per se, but a great deck management tool. Drop a VIP into the quarters (Brunt via a Writ?) and help manipulate your deck. The promenade shops works slightly differently by earning a draw for a successful probe (event, interrupt, or equipment). However, since the Rules of Acquisition themselves are events, and you might be playing with gobs of Latinum or other equipment, Ferengi decks tend to have higher ratio of good probe cards than many other decks. If you are using DS9 for Quark's Bar, consider adding one (or both) of these sites for additional deck management options.

The Mr. Trick: Here's a card engine that can be quite useful if you are planning a trip into the mirror universe. Since each of the four Mirror Ferengi Misterys downloads the next in the series (and they cycle) when one leaves play the best way to set this up is as follows...use a Mirror Ferengi Shuttle (you'll need a place for the Ferengi to report as they download each other) and a self-seeded Chula: the Lights. Red shirt one of the Mr. Ferengi into the Lights--that will send the Ferengi to your hand, while then downloading the next Mr. Ferengi to the shuttle. Repeat several times until you have accumulated a handful of Ferengi. Then use the Obelisk of Masaka to download Masaka Transformations and send those Ferengi to the bottom of your draw deck...while simultaneously drawing a new batch of cards and replenishing your hand now vacated by the Misterys. This trick is best done by using two copies of each of the Mr. Ferengi

(for a possible total of eight cards in a reboot). Theoretically, with enough copies of the Misters you could completely cycle your deck in one draw! But beware Scorched Hand which can penalize you for having more than twelve cards. This is a great trick to replenish (even up in YJ speak) your hand mid-game...

Vacuum-Desiccated Remains: another very useful support card (especially in light of the mean killer dilemmas that populated the Mirror Mirror expansion) and one that doesn't get enough play. Simple enough premise: your opponent's cards kills off one of your Ferengi--use this interrupt to profit from their demise (draw cards or download latinum). A few of these sprinkled in your deck can provide a well needed boost of latinum or cards and will easily out value a bit of deck dilution.

Live Long and Prosper: Did someone say prosper? My lobes are ringing! This card engine is similar to the Vacuum-Desiccated Remains but works when one of your opponent's cards dies. Instead of that person resting in the discard pile it is returned to her hand and YOU draw cards for skill dots. If you are not planning the Smackdown, use this card in conjunction with selective killers. A good post Mirror Mirror Combo: Kelvan Show of Force + Live Long and Prosper. Since Kelvan has the advantage of letting you choose two personnel, one of whom WILL die, your best plan is to choose the two people with the most skill dots. After they die, simply prosper by live long and prosper. More card draws!

6<sup>th</sup> Rule of Acquisition: another card with options. Play on one Ferengi who has Greed or Treachery and place another who names or is named by (in the lore) that Ferengi at the bottom of your draw deck. Download two equipment cards, one Ferengi Ship, or draw up to three cards. While this could be used either as a reporting engine (get a ship) it might be more useful as a drawing engine. Three cards can be quite versatile...better yet, you can combine this card with Ferengi Conference...Brunt qualifies and names Leck (civilian with 4 skill dots). If you play Ferengi Conference every turn you can download both Leck and up to 7 more skill dots of Ferengi...then use the 6<sup>th</sup> rule on Brunt to send Leck back to the draw deck and draw three cards. With 7 skill dots of additional civilian AND three card draws the net benefit is a VERY powerful engine with low cost.

33<sup>rd</sup> Rule of Acquisition: a rarely used card, but perhaps one that shouldn't be overlooked. To use this card is quite simple...play the rule on your Greed personnel at a mission (or Borg only objective) that your opponent has completed. Compliment her score. Depending on the answer you score points or draw up to FOUR cards...this can be a great boost in the mid to late game...and don't forget that between the Scepter of the Nagus and the book of Rules you can download a rule and play it (or cycle it) for free...

34<sup>th</sup> and 35<sup>th</sup> Rules of Acquisition : War is Good for Business and Peace is good for Business. While these rules counter each other (alternately) the Ferengi can best capitalize on their benefits. First, they have the most Acquisition personnel in the game (by far). Second, they have the easiest access to rule downloads and manipulation. Third: Ferengi Smackdown!! Use the 34<sup>th</sup> rule to assault an uncomanded Empok Nor (for an easy, safe target)...or if your plans are not as aggressive, use the 35<sup>th</sup> rule as you acquire resources. There is no reason for the Ferengi NOT to be using one (or both) of these cards...

HQ: Ferengi Credit Exchange. Another versatile card (which downloads thanks to Grand Nagus Zek or simply for free to the HQ) that can easily fuel a number of strategies. This works by discarding Latinum (up to three per turn) for points or for card draws. And with so many cards downloading Latinum (which can download directly from your discard pile courtesy of the 1<sup>st</sup> Rule of Acquisition) or from a free report via Ishka your options for obtaining quantities of Latinum are vast. Personally, I love to use this card in combination with Dabo: discard Latinum for card draws, then wager that same Latinum at the Dabo table for points or even more card draws.

There are, of course, many other possible card engines that your Ferengi can utilize: process ore, Kivas Fajo--collector, the Traveler, Return Orbs to Bajor, etc. What I recommend when building a Ferengi deck is to use the combination of card engines that best suits your strategy. For example, if you are using a deck that includes the mission Purchase Moon, latinum-based draws are the way to go. If you are planning a lot of Ferengi Conferences adding a couple of extra Vacuum-Desiccated Remains might really help. If you are playing Smackdown, the 34<sup>th</sup> rule and Live Long and Prosper might assist. If you are planning an excursion into the Mirror Universe the Mr. Trick might help. The key is using combinations of strategies that best help focus your deck and propel your Ferengi to greatness.

## **Rule #41: Deck types and alternate options...**

### A. Mission:

Most Star Trek games are won by solving missions, and the Ferengi are no exception (although you can easily supplement mission solving with other ways of scoring points...and the Ferengi excel at that!)

1. The Ferengi classic mission solver:  
Certain missions are designed for the Ferengi: Gunrunning, Purchase Moon, and Market Research. These missions require skills like greed and acquisition—which the Ferengi have in abundance. Purchase moon increases in value depending on how much Latinum you want to spend! (Hello Ishka!). Market Research, a universal mission, requires Greed x2, Acquisition, Anthropology, Stellar Cartography and cunning...universal Ferengi (like Nava and Nilva) supply most of the skills required to solve them. To build this type of deck, simply pile on the duplicates of your mission solvers and punch through whatever dilemmas await.
2. Geology extraordinaire!  
Speaking of Nilva (with Science and geology)...several missions seemed designed for him: Geological Survey (with a cool 10 point addition if you have three geology or three greed); Mineral Survey (another mission requiring those same skills—and this one with a card drawing bonus for solving); Mining Survey (a great place to put Empok Nor and draw cards for attacking, or reporting Brunt's shuttle with crew, or staging a Ferengi Infestation reporting attack); and Feldomite Rush (can you say the

universal Letek? An officer with geology, treachery and Medical). Any of these four missions can quickly become a focus point for a slick prospector deck.

3. **Archaeology and the DNA deck.**  
While the massive 55 point Hunt for DNA program is usually the sole obsession of the Federation or Romulans, don't forget that Uncover DNA clues adds a Ferengi icon to one of the biggest missions in the game. The Enhanced Premiere mission Excavation II also requires Archaeology. And the Ferengi have some good Archeology personnel: The intelligent scientist Tol, the crafty Daimon Omag, another Officer/Scientist Sovak, the universal officer Solak, the Barash recreation Prot, and the easily accessible Grand Nagus Gint. Add the non-aligned support of Galen, Ocett, and few others and you have a dig. Even more surprising can be a Ferengi AU drop deck!! Mix in an Edo Vessel (!) and a Space-Time Portal and Gint and Prot becomes the focal points of a quite surprising and powerful deck. The unlikely additions of Balok, Berlingoff Rasmussen, Dr. Roger Korby, Sevek, and a bit of strength (Ruk anyone?) have everything you need for a bit of archaeological mayhem!
4. **Dual icon delicacies.**  
Deliver Supplies and Runabout Search are both 40-point dual icon missions that the Ferengi have amazing access to. Deliver Supplies requires two civilians (that's what the Tower of Commerce or Ferengi Conference is for!) Both require transporter skill. Medical and Greed and a freighter are the only things remaining for BOTH missions. Use Dr. Farek as an AMS, Defend Homeworld for Nibor (the Ferengi way) or Lore, play civilians for free and a freighter for free to the Docking ports at DS9 and you're off and running. Focus your deck around those two missions and you can quickly blast your way to success. Don't forget that if your opponent seeds either of those missions, your Ferengi can thief their way to a quick 40 points.
5. **Search for Weapons/Kressari Rendezvous.**  
While usually a Cardassian Combination, several copies of Search for Weapons and Kressari Rendezvous can quickly add up fast for the Ferengi. With the bonus of Latinum to buy additional weapons, you have a distinct advantage over the spoon heads...the exceptional ASP Prak (Officer, Navigation, and Stellar Cartography) needs only to be accompanied by treachery...and you have everything you need. Alternatively, Kressari Rendezvous needs an Officer and a smuggler...Solok and Omag can both deliver those weapons by themselves!
6. **The Gamma Quadrant.**  
Why would the Ferengi leave the profitable confines of the Alpha Quadrant? Simple: MORE profits! Four gamma quadrant missions (Camping Trip, Quest for the Sword, Survey Star System, and Tulaberry Wine Negotiations) are ripe with profits for the Ferengi. Quark and Pel and Jake and Nog and Frooms? It sounds like a bad sitcom, but it can be a powerful deck...especially when combined with the 75<sup>th</sup> Rule of Acquisition...and don't forget the Ferengi conference can download as many of those rules as you need!

7. Establish Trade Route

If the previous six mission based archetypes aren't enough for you, there is another option that opens up a world of profitable opportunities. Establish Trade Route works for the Ferengi much like Subjugate Planet works for the Dominion. Any space mission you seed with a point box becomes accessible with alternative mission requirements—Greed + a Ferengi ship + Acquisition x3 and cunning greater than twice the value of the mission. Ferengi PNZ? An option. Want to disguise your deck to look like a Dominion deck? Try Construct Depot. Maximize the Ferengi play advantage with additional options.

8. Bribery

Not enough options in space? Try Bribery...this incident allows you (among other options) to discard a Gold Pressed Latinum with your Greed or Smuggling personnel to add a Ferengi icon to a mission until the end of your next turn. Mr. Nog and Grand Nagus Gint both download Bribery. Want a method of solving Espionage Mission with its two FCA requirement? Try Brunt and Bribery. Literally any mission in the game is a possibility...but remember the key rules...FOCUS. Use missions that supplement your personnel.

B. Points

Supplementing mission solving, Ferengi decks often include one or more other ways of scoring points. Often decks work just fine, crawling along to about ninety or ninety-five points, and then come to an ear-screaming halt. Worse, you're stuck behind a dead end just short of the fifty points you need. A Higher the Fewer or Mandarin Bailiff has thrown a kink in your plans. There are classic solutions: tent for the Phoenix and play it to a headquarters for a fast 10 points. Plant a drought tree. Hit a self-seeded Sarjenka or Barclay's Protomorphosis Disease. These still apply...but as an entrepreneurial species, the Ferengi can do other things to score points. I recommend building them into your deck from the beginning...NOT as a last minute solution.

1. Colony

Colonies might be old school...but they work exceptionally well with the Ferengi. The premise is simple: solve a planet, plunk down people (preferably civilians) and score points. Q's Planet is a classic vacation spot, but any planet will really do. Why do the Ferengi do colonies better? Civilians. Civilians that report for free. Civilians that can be downloaded by Ferengi Conference. Remember that you can't collect points for multiple copies of Frool, but take advantage of the reporting mechanisms that allow the Ferengi to excel at colonizing!

2. Dabo!

Who doesn't like scantily clad girls spinning wheels and bringing drinks with an inflated markup? Dabo decks are great with the Ferengi. Utilize Quark's Bar (Leeta downloads it or download it to the bar via ops). Wager cards in your discard pile, probe. Why do the Ferengi excel at dabo? Since Equipment cards

(think Latinum) Events (think Rules of Acquisition) or skill dots (personnel) make up a higher percentage of a Ferengi deck than any other, you can expect better success.

### 3. HQ: Ferengi Credit Exchange

Spend latinum, score points! It's that simple. And since you have MANY options to acquire latinum, to download latinum, to play latinum for free, it's a very good card. HQ: FCE is one of the most flexible cards in the game. You have three options for each latinum "spent": draw a card, score two points (latinum goes out of play), or place any card in your discard pile beneath your draw deck. If you need six points fast you can simply spend the latinum. However, combine with Dabo and you have a potent card-drawing engine AND point machine. Discard latinum to draw cards...then wager that latinum at the Dabo wheel. It's a very potent engine and a good supplement to any latinum-heavy deck. You do need an acquisition personnel to activate it, but Grand Nagus Zek can download it and activate it.

### Rule # 62: The Rules of Acquisition...

Originally a marketing ploy (who would buy the suggestions of acquisition) the ten rules that populate the game can add a tremendous flexibility to the Ferengi. This section will look at those rules. To maximize their use, you'll want to use two equipment cards: Scepter of the Grand Nagus (which lets a rule play for free each turn) and The Ferengi Rules of Acquisition (which lets you download to your hand any Rule card that you need, or to "cycle" an unneeded one). With these two equipment cards (and Maihar'du can download the Scepter and Gint can download the Rules themselves) you can effectively play (for free) one Rule of Acquisition per turn. Take advantage of that combination!

1. 1<sup>st</sup> Rule: Pretty much essential to a Ferengi deck (and already discussed in the reporting section above) seeding the first rule will let you download a Ferengi VIP and/or Gold pressed latinum to your hand. This will jump start any deck considering the usefulness of those VIP's...its second feature lets you download from your discard pile any downloaded latinum. Since you'll need latinum, it's a very flexible additional feature for a card you'll use anyway!
2. 6<sup>th</sup> Rule: A card drawing engine (see above) but also a flexible way to download either equipment or a Ferengi ship. Its cost, placing a Ferengi beneath your draw deck, is often mitigated by other methods of getting Ferengi into play. An example, you can get Brunt and Quark into play on the first turn with the Writ and Isolinear Rods...they can trigger the 6<sup>th</sup> rule. Then Quark can be downloaded again later with a Ferengi Conference. Don't look at the cost of this card as a detriment since your deck should be focused and redundant anyway. To assist you in determining which Ferengi with greed or treachery who name or are named by another Ferengi I've included a handy/dandy chart—the first column lists the



Ferengi with Greed or Treachery (necessary for the Rule) the second lists who they name or are named by.

<b>Ferengi with Greed or Treachery:</b>	<b>Ferengi named or named by Ferengi with greed or treachery.</b>
Brunt	Quark, Leck, Mr. Brunt
Falar	Bractor
Frool	None
Gaila	Quark, Ishka, Rom
Goss	None
Gral	Quark
Grand Nagus Gint	Rom, Quark
Grand Nagus Zek	Ishka, Krax, Maihar'du, Lumba
Krax	Grand Nagus Zek
Leck	Brunt Ishka
Letek	Taar, Mordoc
Lurin	Berik, Dr. Borts, Krunk, Morta
Mr. Nog	Nog
Nilva	Lumba
Omag	None
Par Lenor	Qol
Quark	Brunt, Gaila, Gral, Grand Nagus Gint, Ishka, Pel, Rom
Sovak	None
Tog	Nibor, The Trois
<b>Non-Aligned Ferengi with greed or treachery:</b>	
Dr. Farek	None
Bok	Birta, Kazago, Tol

3. 33<sup>rd</sup> Rule: Both a drawing engine and point possibility I looked at it under card engines. Here, it should be noted that this card is more of a contingency than a staple—mainly because it requires your opponent to have already solved a mission or Borg objective...and for you to be at that location. But when utilized as a backup it can be quite effective and unexpected.
4. 34<sup>th</sup> Rule: War is Good for Business. Battle. Draw cards or download latinum. For your best use, use an uncommandeered Empok Nor—since you can battle it even if you seed them yourself!

5. 35<sup>th</sup> Rule: Peace is Good for Business. Don't Battle. Draw a card or download latinum. You SHOULD be using either the 34<sup>th</sup> or 35<sup>th</sup> rule in any deck. If you don't plan on battling, make sure you acquire an extra card draw just for being a pacifist.
6. 47<sup>th</sup> Rule: Another underutilized rule, but one with two very powerful options. The first can be unexpected and devastating to your opponent. This rule nullifies all Palor Toff Cards. Prevent your opponent from getting something she needs back. Use HQ: Credit Exchange so YOU can get things back...a great use of your free rule. The second use can delay your opponent...drop one of these on Dr. Farek (a Mission specialist with greed) and then you can temporarily remove anyone who isn't a mission specialist by sending that person to the top of the draw deck. However there is a much more devious (and potentially more profitable use)...probe rigging. Since one of the successful probes in Dabo is a skill dot, use this rule on yourself to guarantee success.
7. 59<sup>th</sup> Rule: A potential card engine AND psychological weapon...this rule also doesn't see a lot of play but can still be quite useful. Why? Because more than likely you can benefit from doing something your opponent will be doing anyway—attempting missions. Here, it plays on your Nagus giving him some sort of “consolatory role”...advise your opponent to attempt a mission (perhaps one she was going to anyway)...either she has to wait three turns for the countdown to expire or discard cards—which also lets you draw cards!
8. 62<sup>nd</sup> Rule: Bonus points AND point deprivation! An excellent concept. This rule plays on an unattempted mission, and as long as you can solve that mission using between 3 and 7 personnel you score an extra ten points while your opponent loses ten points: a 20-point swing. Combine with other point deprivation tricks and you can really slow down your opponent. Another possibility: Q's planet. It's often VERY easy to solve this mission and can cause a quick 20-point swing for a zero point mission.]
9. 75<sup>th</sup> Rule of Acquisition: score points or download latinum for exploring a non-native quadrant...This used to be limited to the gamma quadrant, but Mirror Mirror has provided the Mirror quadrant to explore and exploit, and Voyager will soon introduce the Delta Quadrant. If your strategy is to explore one of those quadrants utilize this rule for the extra boost...and don't forget the Ferengi Conference can download this for you in multiple.
10. 211<sup>th</sup> Rule of Acquisition: Another interesting and underutilized counter that fits best in a Dabo deck or deck based around Deep Space Nine. Here, if your opponent wishes to play a card on your turn he must discard cards equal to your dabo girls and waiters minus his personnel at the bar or a Ferengi trading post. This may not seem like much, but if your opponent CANNOT discard, he cannot play the card on your turn. And note, this is for each card: a pair of wormholes will cost him twice!

The key to utilizing the rules of acquisition is to use the ones that might enhance your primary strategy or take your opponent by surprise. Since you can download one and play one for free each turn, there is no excuse NOT to be using them. And the look of surprise might be just the thing.

Rule # 80: Point Deprivation tricks...

As we just saw with 62<sup>nd</sup> rule, point deprivation can be quite powerful. While you are using this to score points and drain them—remember there is no cost for trying the 62<sup>nd</sup> rule. Even if nullified you don't lose points.

The most potent point denial trick is the new garbage scow combo dilemma and the interrupt Destroy Radioactive Garbage Scow. Since this dilemma can seed on a planet you can potentially catch a hoard of people in a fiery radioactive death...and drain points. A suggested combo: Ferengi Infestation (this IS a Ferengi article) + The Higher...the Fewer + Female's Love Interest/Garbage Scow. Add a Mission Debriefing to stop them and destroy away!

But don't forget Hero of the Empire. A Ferengi deck that is going to the gamma quadrant will be immune to the effects of your opponent's HOTE, while you can use your own to reduce your opponent's chances of a full win. Add the 75<sup>th</sup> rule and you can further exploit this unexpected combination.

And while other affiliations are struggling to deal with point deprivation combinations, the Ferengi have a card that they can utilize more effectively than other affiliations, and protect them at the same time, from some of the nastier deprivation tricks: Bribery. Simply discard the incident to prevent the loss of up to 9 points. While this won't protect you from the 62<sup>nd</sup> rule or a Destroy Radioactive Garbage Scow, it WILL often protect you from The Higher...the Fewer or a stray Mandarin Bailiff. Utilize it!

### **Conclusion:**

The Ferengi ARE a power in the universe. They bribe. They can assassinate (Leck), they can download any number of strange things. They whine, they sneer, they whip. Basically, the Ferengi acquire. They are fun and funny. They have rules of acquisition to assist you in your economic conquest of the universe.

This guide is by no means complete. It barely hints at the madness that a Protection Racket can cause. It merely causes a ringing in my lobes at some of the fastest, landable ships in the game. It only scratches the surface of a Ferengi Infestation at your opponent's facilities or Empok Nor.

I hope that this guide will inspire you to acquire the Ferengi as a viable, fun, and fast affiliation worthy of the highest caliber of tournament play. Finally enjoy the fruits of acquisition with the following deck that utilizes some of the themes above...consider this a special bonus, at very low cost; the royalties of using this deck are quite cheap...

## **Ferengi Latinum Madness!**

### **Missions:**

Pegasus Search  
Deliver Message  
Runabout Search  
Kressari Rendezvous  
Deliver Supplies  
Acquire Illicit Explosives

### ***Seed Cards:***

Space-time portal  
Q's Tent  
Brunt  
Kukulaka  
The Ferengi Rules of Acquisition  
Grand Nagus Zek  
HQ: Ferengi Credit Exchange  
Quark's Treasure  
Hidden Fighter  
Establish Landing Protocols  
6th Rule of Acquisition  
34th Rule of Acquisition  
Protection Racket  
Medical Kit  
Writ of Accountability

### **Battle Bridge Door**

Evasive Maneuvers x 3  
Plasma Energy Burst x3  
Ferengi Energy Weapon x4  
Strafing Run x5  
Full Phaser Spread

### **Dilemmas:**

Maglock x2  
Gravimetric Distortion  
Punishment Box x2  
Borg Ship x2  
The Sheliak x2  
Q  
Chula: The Chandra  
Hazardous Duty x2  
Berserk Changeling

Shaka, When the Walls Fell  
New Essentialists  
Ferengi Infestation x2  
Dead End

**Facilities:**

Deep Space Nine  
Tower of Commerce

**Sites:**

Docking Ports  
Cargo Bay  
Guest Quarters  
Promenade Shops  
Quark's Bar

**Other Seeds:**

Defend Home world  
Quark's Isolinear Rods  
Writ of Accountability  
Bribery  
1st Rule of Acquisition  
HQ: Secure Home world

**Draw Deck:**

Gaila  
Rom  
Leeta  
Letek  
Berik  
Krax  
Maihar'du  
Birta  
Par Lenor  
Gral  
Leck  
Goss  
Lurin  
Quark  
Ishka  
Pel  
Mardah  
Nava x3  
Lore  
Kasidy Yates  
Aluura

Morn  
K'Kora Transport x3  
B'rel  
Scepter of the Grand Nagus  
Plasmadyne Relay  
Ferengi Disruptor Rifle x2  
Gold Pressed Latinum x 20  
6th Rule of Acquisition x 5  
Q-Net  
Scan x2  
Alternate Universe Door  
Colony  
Dabo  
Ferengi Conference x7

## Affiliation Overview: Mirror Universe

### Seeing Double: The Mirror Universe Coalitions By Chris Heard

A whole series of *Deep Space Nine* episodes and several *Star Trek: The Next Generation* novels have probed the depths of the parallel universe first visited by the crew of the original starship *Enterprise* in the classic *Star Trek* episode "Mirror, Mirror." An expansion set by that same name introduced this fascinating universe to the *Star Trek Customizable Card Game* just before the publication of this volume, and Decipher even created a new Mirror Universe sanctioned tournament format to celebrate.

#### A. The Mirror Quadrant

The Mirror Universe is represented in game terms by the Mirror Quadrant. An [MQ] icon similar to those used to denote the Gamma and Delta Quadrants marks missions, facilities, personnel, and ships native to the Mirror Quadrant. The Mirror Universe is not exactly a "quadrant" in storyline terms, but in game terms this is the most convenient existing way of handling the Mirror Universe and its denizens. As with the Gamma Quadrant, missions in the Mirror Quadrant form their own little spaceline. Similarly, facilities with [MQ] icons can seed only in the Mirror Universe, and [MQ] personnel must normally report for duty in the Mirror Universe (when reporting using a facility or site card, but see below for ways around this restriction).

#### B. Mirror Universe Personnel in Alpha Quadrant Decks

The simplest way to use Mirror Universe personnel in your existing deck is simply to incorporate those personnel whose affiliation is compatible with the one(s) you're already playing. You can incorporate the four Mirror Universe Ferengi, for example, into your

existing Ferengi deck without much difficulty. The biggest "catch" is the [MQ] icon, which forces [MQ] ships and personnel to report in the Mirror Universe when reporting to facilities or sites. This "catch" is not actually very difficult to overcome, however, since a variety of mechanisms exist for rendering the [MQ] icon basically irrelevant for reporting purposes.

The most important general rule to remember in this regard is that *the rule that personnel and ships must report in their native quadrant (the "native quadrant rule") only applies when the reporting is enabled by a facility or site card*. If the reporting is allowed by any other mechanism--for example, the objective Assign Mission Specialists or Professor Sisko's special skill--the "native quadrant rule" is irrelevant. You may download an [MQ] mission specialist to an Alpha Quadrant outpost using Assign Mission Specialists, because the reporting is being allowed by the objective, not by the outpost. You may download an [MQ] ship using the Spacedoor on an Alpha Quadrant outpost, because the reporting is enabled by the doorway, not the facility. You may download an [MQ] support personnel to a site on a matching Alpha Quadrant Nor using Assign Support Personnel, because the reporting is enabled by the objective, not by the site. You may report an [MQ] Bajoran to The Emissary regardless of The Emissary's current quadrant, because the reporting is being allowed by a personnel card, not a facility. You may special-download an appropriate [MQ] personnel to a ship like the *I.S.S. Enterprise* or *Starship Enterprise*, because the reporting is being allowed by the ship, not by a facility or site.

In this connection, it is important to realize that allowing a download is not the same thing as allowing reporting. A card that tells you *where* to put a ship, personnel, or equipment card into play--whether the card to be reported is in your hand or in a location from which it may be downloaded--is allowing reporting. A card that allows you to download a card without specifying the location at which it should enter play is not allowing reporting. Thus the downloading functions of objectives like Assign Mission Specialists and Assign Support Personnel enable reporting, because they specify that the downloaded cards should enter play at one of your outposts, or a ship or facility that matches the affiliation of the downloaded personnel. The downloading functions of an objective like Defend Homeworld or Visit Cochrane Memorial, or of a personnel skill like those of the Mirror Universe Ferengi, however, do not specify locations where the downloaded cards should enter play. The cards thus downloaded must therefore report to some card in play that itself allows reporting. If this card is a facility or site, the "native quadrant rule" must be obeyed. Thus, if you use Defend Homeworld to download Bareil, you must find a place to report him (Defend Homeworld does not specify). If that place is a facility or a site, it must be in his (and its own) native quadrant--Promenade Shops on Mirror Terok Nor, for example. If there is some other reporting mechanism, such as The Emissary, Bareil may be able to report outside his native quadrant.

In the immediate wake of the Mirror, Mirror expansion, the most prevalent non-facility, non-site mechanisms for reporting [MQ] ships outside the Mirror Universe are Spacedoor (for universal ships) and Construct Starship (for unique ships). The most common non-facility, non-site mechanisms for reporting [MQ] personnel outside the Mirror Quadrant

are special downloads on the 23rd-century Terran Empire ships, Mirror Ferengi Shuttle (allows [MQ] Ferengi and Ezri to report aboard), Assign Mission Specialists, Assign Support Personnel, The Emissary (allows Bajorans to report to his location), Professor Sisko (allows any Sisko to report to her location), and Crew Reassignment (since all [MQ] ships have either [KCA] or [TE] icons as a staffing requirement).

Another elegant way of getting [MQ] personnel (but not ships) into your Alpha Quadrant deck is to use Crossover, a seedable hidden agenda. You may use one of Crossover's functions each turn; one of those functions allows your [MQ] personnel to ignore his or her [MQ] icon when reporting. Crossover can be combined with a downloading mechanism for great flexibility; for example, you could use Defend Homeworld to download Overseer Odo, and use Crossover's first function to let him ignore his [MQ] icon and report to the Chamber of Ministers on "our" Bajor. Crossover especially works wonders at incorporating [MQ][OS] personnel into an [OS] deck using free reporting at Sherman's Peak, since ignoring the [MQ] icon makes the [OS] personnel behave as if they were native to Sherman's Peak for reporting purposes.

## C. Coalitions, Affiliations, and Their Interactions

### 1. Creating the Coalitions with Emblem Cards

The two Mirror Universe coalitions are the Terran Empire ("TE") and the Klingon/Cardassian Alliance ("KCA") that later displaced and destroyed that Empire. Association of specific personnel, ships, and facilities with these coalitions is indicated by an icon on the personnel, ship, or facility card. Such cards also belong to one of the established affiliations in the game--Federation, Ferengi, Bajoran, Cardassian, Klingon, or Non-Aligned. Understanding how the icons and affiliations work together--or don't--for these personnel, ships, and facilities is crucial to using them successfully.

The two Emblem cards, Emblem of the Alliance and Emblem of the Empire, have treaty-like functions that create the Mirror Universe coalitions in game terms. Emblem of the Alliance allows your [KCA] cards (plus a few Alpha Quadrant personnel) to mix and cooperate, while Emblem of the Empire allows your [TE] cards (plus a few Alpha Quadrant personnel) to mix and cooperate. (The Emblem cards have other functions as well, discussed later in this chapter.) Since the Emblem cards are incidents, there is no way to nullify them; therefore, you may use them without fear that your Klingon [KCA] cards and Bajoran [KCA] cards (for example) will become incompatible with each other later in the game. Moreover, both Emblem cards are seedable by their own game text; even better, when you seed Disrupt Alliance (Mirror Universe Bajor) or Search for Rebels (the planetoid in the Mirror Universe Badlands containing the subterranean Terran hideout as seen in "Through the Looking Glass"), the mission's game text allows you to download one Emblem card. Thus, if you are using the appropriate mission(s), your Emblem card(s) in effect "seeds for free."

Using Emblem cards does not affect the interaction of your [KCA] or [TE] icon cards with cards of the various affiliations. For example, your [KCA] Klingons may freely mix



and cooperate with your non-[KCA] Klingons regardless of whether Emblem of the Alliance is in play or not. If you have Emblem of the Alliance in play, your [KCA] Klingons may freely mix and cooperate with your [KCA] Bajorans. However, even with the Emblem, your [KCA] Klingons may not mix and cooperate with non-[KCA] Bajorans, and your [KCA] Bajorans may not board your non-[KCA] Klingon ship (unless, of course, you have Treaty: Bajoran/Klingon in play).

Both Emblem cards have other functions that enrich their usefulness. Both Emblem cards allow you to download The Art of Diplomacy, a useful incident that allows certain of your armed personnel to use 2 Treachery as 1 Diplomacy, along with other functions. Both Emblem cards protect the Ore Processing Units on certain [MQ] Nors from Reactor Overload if 2 ENGINEER present there. And both Emblem cards lift attack restrictions for the personnel specified in their game texts.

Additionally, Emblem of the Alliance allows you, once each turn, to report one of your [KCA] personnel for free if you have in play a [KCA] leader who names (or is named by) them in lore. While this free reporting is not quite as reliable as that provided by headquarters (a type of facility not available to the Alliance), almost all [KCA] personnel mention either The Intendant, Regent Worf, Overseer Odo, and/or Security Chief Garak in their lore.

Emblem of the Empire, on the other hand, makes staffed [TE] ships and facilities immune to Navigate Plasma Storms--a vital function, since the 24th-century Terrans operate so much in the Badlands. The lifting of attack restrictions for [TE] and a few other personnel is a helpful and appropriate function, since most [TE] personnel are Federation affiliation. Players using mixed [TE] and non-[TE] Federation cards need to be careful about this, however. Affiliation attack restrictions apply to *ships* as well as to *personnel*. With Emblem of the Empire in play, Benjamin Sisko and James Tiberius Kirk have no attack restrictions. If, however, they are together aboard the *U.S.S. Defiant*, they still cannot initiate an attack against any affiliation other than the Borg (barring counterattacks, Wartime Conditions, Captain Kirk, Admiral Riker, Admiral Leyton, etc.), since the *U.S.S. Defiant* itself has Federation attack restrictions.

## 2. Special Features of the Klingon/Cardassian Alliance

The free reporting feature of Emblem of the Alliance depends completely on card lore, so it's helpful to get as many [KCA] leaders as possible out early in the game if you wish to take advantage of the free reporting. The big advantage to free reporting using Emblem of the Alliance is that there are no location restrictions on this reporting. The personnel you report for free need not report at the same location as the [KCA] leader whose lore is fueling the Emblem. The Intendant is most to be desired in this regard, since she is named in the lore of nine other [KCA] personnel, three of whom (Security Chief Garak, Ezri, and Mr. Sisko) are themselves named in other [KCA] personnel's lore. To ensure that she gets into play early, you will need to download her to the Guest Quarters on your nor, retrieve her from your Q's Tent side deck, stock multiple copies in your draw deck, or

swap her for Kira Nerys (who can be downloaded with Defend Homeworld) using Transporter Mixup.

Alliance ships tend to be slightly more powerful than their Alpha Quadrant counterparts. A universal Alliance K'Vort, for example, has WEAPONS and SHIELDS 1 point higher than a universal Alpha Quadrant K'Vort. A similar pattern can be found when comparing the Alliance Vor'Cha with the I.K.C. Vor'Cha, the Alliance Galor with the more familiar Galor, and so on. Regent Worf's special skill makes [KCA] ships even more powerful. When aboard a [KCA] ship, Regent Worf can assign any [KCA] personnel who matches the ship's affiliation (including himself) to be its matching commander. The Regent can also special-download Make It So, which can then download Ready Room Door, which in turn can download and protect Captain's Log. There is no limit on how many times Regent Worf may use the commander-assignment skill (even in a single turn), making [KCA] armadas very attractive and much more flexible than the popular Bajoran "Pire for hire" armadas. The biggest problem with aggressive, offensive [KCA] armadas is the difficulty of getting them out of the Mirror Quadrant. To move through the Bajoran Wormhole: Mirror Universe, a ship must be damaged or have ENGINEER and SCIENCE aboard. Damaged ships aren't all that useful to an armada, and ENGINEER and SCIENCE aren't all that easy for the Alliance to generate in multiples without significant investment in personnel and/or equipment.

### 3. Special Features of the Terran Empire/Rebellion

The Terran Rebellion HQ is both the toughest facility currently in the game, with its SHIELDS of 54, and a fantastic quick reporting engine. Most headquarters only allow a subset of compatible personnel to report there for free, such as ambassadors, High Council members, senators, kais, vedeks, and so on. Not so the Terran Rebellion HQ. *Any* [TE] personnel who does not have an [AU] icon can report for free there, allowing a well-designed Rebellion deck to report personnel with blinding speed. (Of course, you'll need a good card-drawing engine to keep up with all that free reporting.)

Given that most of the unique [MQ] personnel are counterparts of familiar Alpha Quadrant personnel, and that the unique [MQ] Federation personnel are more common than any other unique [MQ] group, the Empire/Rebellion clearly has an advantage over the Alliance in personnel. Unfortunately, they "make up" for this advantage with their relatively underpowered ships. While the Rebel Interceptor isn't exactly origami, neither is it built to stand up even to an Alliance K'Vort. Nor does the Empire/Rebellion have anywhere near the ability to take advantage of Captain's Log that the Alliance does. On the other hand, the Rebel Interceptor does have great RANGE when moving about in the Badlands. Moreover, several of the [OS][TE] personnel (Marlena Moreau, First Officer Spock, James Tiberius Kirk) can download and use equipment cards (such as the Classic Tricorder and Classic Communicator) that make it easier for the Rebellion to must up ENGINEER and SCIENCE for passage through the Bajoran Wormhole: Mirror Universe.

### D. Moving between Universes

If you are playing one of the Mirror Universe coalitions, you almost certainly will want to venture into the Alpha Quadrant (or maybe the Gamma Quadrant), since the opportunity to score 100 points in the Mirror Quadrant alone is a bit demanding (though not impossible).

As the previous section indicates, one of the most obvious options for moving from the Alpha Quadrant to the Mirror Quadrant, and vice versa, is Bajoran Wormhole: Mirror Universe. This Bajoran Wormhole acts in many respects like the more familiar [DS9] Bajoran Wormhole, but with some special features of its own. The analysis above already mentioned the requirements for passage between the Bajoran Wormhole: Mirror Universe and the [DS9] Bajoran Wormhole: the ship must be damaged or have SCIENCE and ENGINEER aboard. Unlike its [DS9] counterpart, Bajoran Wormhole: Mirror Universe is seedable by its own game text. The Mirror Universe version downloads the [DS9] version to the Alpha Quadrant Bajor region (and that one in turn downloads another [DS9] wormhole into the Gamma Quadrant). Note that the Bajoran Wormhole: Mirror Universe does not lead only to the Alpha Quadrant Bajoran Wormhole, but may lead to "a [DS9] Bajoran Wormhole," including the one in the Gamma Quadrant. Of course, Wormhole interrupts also work just as well to move a ship from the Mirror Quadrant to another quadrant, and may be fairly efficient in combination with Enhanced Premiere's mission II cards and a good card-drawing engine (perhaps Ore Processing on an [MQ] Nor).

If you only want to move personnel and equipment, not ships, between the Mirror and Alpha Quadrants, the Multidimensional Transport Device is your solution. This device allows your transporters (whether on a facility or ship) to beam into the opposite quadrant, anywhere within the corresponding region or location, ignoring all SHIELDS. The implications of this are somewhat staggering. From anywhere in the Mirror Quadrant Bajor region, you can invade your opponent's Alpha Quadrant Terok Nor or Deep Space Nine. From the Terran Rebellion HQ, you can beam your personnel and equipment to anywhere in the Alpha Quadrant Badlands. Be careful, though, that you do not strand your personnel at their destination (unless that was your intention). The Multidimensional Transport Device (which may either go with your beaming personnel, or stay behind, at your discretion) can only beam personnel and equipment *to*, not *from*, a destination. If you beam your personnel from Mirror Terok Nor to Jerrado, you cannot beam them back to Mirror Terok Nor using the Multidimensional Transporter Device unless there are some transporters somewhere on Jerrado (which is not assumed for planets).

Both of these mechanisms for travelling between quadrants are easy to get into play quickly. As previously noted, Bajoran Wormhole: Mirror Universe seeds by virtue of its own game text. The Multidimensional Transport Device cannot be seeded (except aboard a Dominion Primary Supply Depot!), but can still come into play quickly using Crossover. Crossover, a seedable hidden agenda, allows you to download a Multidimensional Transport Device just after you report certain personnel (some bearing [KCA] icons, some [TE] icons, some both, and some neither) in their native quadrant. Note, however, Crossover functions "once each turn," so you cannot use both functions

(ignoring a personnel's [MQ] icon and downloading a Multidimensional Transport Device) on the same turn, even if you have multiple copies of Crossover in play.

## E. Deck Archetypes and Modules

### 1. Badlands Beam-Bounce

The Terran Hideout, which becomes the homeworld of Federation [TE] cards if Terran Rebellion HQ is there, is on a planetoid in the Badlands. The capacity of a Multidimensional Transport Device to beam personnel and equipment anywhere in the Alpha Quadrant Badlands from the Terran Rebellion HQ, and to the Terran Rebellion HQ from any transporter in the Badlands, makes a Badlands deck an attractive option for [TE] players.

In addition to the great mobility offered by the Multidimensional Transport Device, Badlands missions feature a great deal of skill redundancy. All Alpha Quadrant Badlands missions require Navigation x2; OFFICER, Honor, and Leadership--required by Search and Rescue and Verify Evidence, tend to run hand in hand and are also useful for solving Search for Rebels using HQ: Secure Homeworld. Moreover, the universal Study Badlands missions, while indefensible by either Fair Play or HQ: Defensive Measures, can be protected somewhat using Navigate Plasma Storms. Recall that Emblem of the Empire makes [TE] facilities and staffed ships immune to that objective.

The two biggest problems with a [TE] Badlands beam-bounce deck are the need for ships in the Alpha Quadrant Badlands and the Stellar Cartography x2 requirement on the universal Study Badlands mission. Stellar Cartography is in short supply for the Rebellion, possessed only by Ezri among 24th-century [TE] personnel (find it also on Chief Engineer Scott and Crewman Wilson, both [OS]). A successful [TE] Badlands beam-bounce deck will thus require multiple copies of Crewman Wilson, protection of Chief Engineer Scott plus use of a Classic Communicator by other [OS] personnel, or assistance from non-[TE] personnel. The latter option is among the most reliable, but requires caution. While you could mix personnel like Lt. Moreau, Morgan Bateson, and Jenna D'Sora with your Federation [TE] personnel, these non-[TE] Federation personnel would not be compatible with non-Federation [TE] personnel like Commander Leeta or the Mirror Universe Ferengi, who might otherwise be useful in your deck and can mix and cooperate with your [TE] Federation personnel thanks to Emblem of the Empire. Non-aligned Stellar Cartography personnel give you more options for mixing personnel, but here you are limited to Dr. Reyga and T'Shonra (since Yint and Zef'No do not work with Federation personnel, even [TE] ones).

Since most of the Alpha Quadrant Badlands missions are space missions, you'll need ships to attempt them. Moreover, you'll need the ships' transporters if you want to send your personnel back to the Mirror Quadrant using the Multidimensional Transport Device. One obvious solution is to seed a Neutral Outpost in the Badlands, using a Spacedoor to download [TE] ships as needed. The chief drawback to this strategy is that Emblem of the Empire will not protect the Neutral Outpost from Navigate Plasma

Storms. Another option is to beam any personnel from the Terran Rebellion HQ to Search and Rescue, then use Hidden Fighter to download a Federation Shuttlecraft, Ferengi Shuttle, Mirror Ferengi Shuttle, Flaxian Scout Vessel, or even Yridian Shuttle as appropriate to your mix of personnel affiliations. A landed ship can trigger a plasma storm probe ("if *any* ship ..."), but Navigate Plasma Storms specifies that only ships and facilities in space can actually be damaged by the storms.

## 2. Bajor Beam-Bounce

What the Rebellion can do in the Badlands region, the Alliance can do in the Bajor region. As above, the key to the Bajor beam-bounce is using the Multidimensional Transport Device to beam back and forth between the two Bajors and other Bajor region locations. Although it is possible to beam between Nors in each universe with this method--say, from Mirror Terok Nor to Deep Space Nine, and back--seeding only three sites per Nor (including one docking site each, to allow reporting) is likely to hamper the Nors' effectiveness. Using Mirror Terok Nor with some other facility in the Bajor region, perhaps a Neutral Outpost (or, at Acquire Illicit Explosives, Ferengi Trading Post) may provide the greatest range of options and defensive posture. Select your Alpha Quadrant facility with care, remembering that Emblem of the Alliance makes your [KCA] Cardassians, Klingons, and Ferengi compatible with your [KCA] Bajorans, but not with a non-[KCA] Bajoran facility (like the Chamber of Ministers).

Targeting both Bajors with HQ: Secure Homeworld obviously gives you excellent mission requirement redundancy, although it may not be strictly necessary, given the number of Cardassians, Non-Aligned personnel, and Ferengi your [KCA] deck can muster. Moreover, the requirements of HQ: Secure Homeworld dovetail nicely with those of Relocate Settlers and Refuse Immigration.

## 3. Ore Processing

Reactor Overload put a damper on Ore Processing using Alpha Quadrant Nors, but the Emblem cards protect Ore Processing Units on certain Nors (Emblem of the Alliance protects any [MQ] Nor; Emblem of the Empire only protects Mirror Terok Nor) from Reactor Overload if 2 ENGINEER present at the Ore Processing Unit. Getting 2 ENGINEER to the Ore Processing Unit is not terribly difficult for either coalition.

For the Alliance, Assign Mission Specialists can download Narik to a Klingon Empire Outpost during the seed phase, and a Spacedoor can grab a ship to get him over to the Nor on the first turn. Getting the second ENGINEER is a little trickier. Ops: Mirror Universe can download Mr. Nog to Quark's Bar, Rinox to Ops itself, Professor Sisko to the Science Lab, or Korvek directly to the Ore Processing Unit. (Remember that all [KCA] personnel "match" a [KCA] Nor's affiliation for purposes related to its sites.) Alternately, Assign Support Personnel could be discarded to download Daro to the Ore Processing Unit (since he matches the Nor's Cardassian affiliation). By downloading Overseer Odo with Defend Homeworld and his special download, an Alliance player can

have ore processing up and running on turn two (all the pieces are in place on turn one, but ore processing itself happens at the beginning of the turn).

The Empire/Rebellion can't guarantee quite as fast a start with ore processing at the Federation version of Mirror Terok Nor. It can almost get there with a sufficient stock of Q's Tents or Process Ore objectives in the draw deck, though it's not quite as sure a shot as Overseer Odo's download. On the other hand, the Terrans have an easier time securing the 2 ENGINEER, using Assign Mission Specialists to download Leah Brahms to a Terran Outpost elsewhere in the Mirror Quadrant.

#### 4. Tantalus Field

The Tantalus Field is a nasty little artifact, capable of killing literally anyone at a given spaceline location ("here"). You can even get the Tantalus Field out without any effort at all, by seeding the Halkan Council, which allows you to download the *I.S.S. Enterprise*, which in turn can special-download James Tiberius Kirk, who himself special-downloads the Tantalus Field and may use it as if earned. If you're in a hurry to get started zapping people, discard a Space-Time Portal to bring the *I.S.S. Enterprise* and Tiberius into your hand, then discard another Space-Time Portal to drop the ship in the Alpha (or Gamma) Quadrant. Be sure to wait to download the Tantalus Field until after you've dropped the ship, though.

The key to keeping the Tantalus Field buzzing is being able to discard cards from the top of your draw deck without feeling too much of sting. You either need a very large deck with all sorts of redundancy, or some method for recycling cards. Two or three Regenerates in your deck might fit the bill (use Long Live the Queen to ditch those annoying dilemmas), but you should also consider ore processing (for which see above).

### **Constructed Deck: Tournament Decks**

Nothing can substitute for seeing a good deck in action, particularly when played by an expert player, but here we've attempted to present the next best thing. Several high-level decks are explained by players who used them to win high-stakes tournaments; they are presented in such a way as to allow the reader a glimpse into the thought processes of the top players. Readers should keep in mind that when using someone else's deck, it is important to make adjustments so that the deck fits your playing style and metagame; don't just copy the deck, but modify it to make it your own!

#### **Tournament Decks: Assign Mission Specialists**

##### **Assign Mission Specialists**

By John Bergman

Assign Mission Specialists; Objective: "Seeds or plays on table. You may download to one outpost up to two different mission specialists that you do

not already have in play. Also, while in play, each of your mission specialists scores 5 points whenever they use their skill to meet a mission requirement. You may voluntarily discard objective at the start of any of your turns. (Unique)"

The expansion "First Contact" was advertised with the slogan, "This changes everything", and they weren't kidding. Aside from the introduction of the Borg affiliation, Assign Mission Specialists (AMS) best epitomizes those changes: it introduced the downloading of personnel by non-Borg affiliations, mega-text cards, and objectives, which to date are immune to nullification. The ability to select and play two personnel each turn with only a single card play allows fast reporting with no additional card drawing mechanism. The bonus points from AMS allow us to score 100 points from two missions while remaining under the protection of Fair Play.

Conceived as a way to bring single-skilled personnel out of binders and on to the playing table, AMS became the hub of what was arguably the most abusive strategy this game as seen when it was combined with Q-bypass. That strategy was de-clawed when AMS was errata'd to no longer be a captain's order (downloadable with Ready Room Door). However, the downloading of personnel and the scoring boost that AMS provides still make it one of the most powerful cards in the game. Here, we consider a deck design that is built around AMS and downloading in general to dispatch two missions in short order.

The concept: This deck uses an aggressive mission attempting strategy. Start attempting on the first or second turn, reveal dilemmas, and download the necessary personnel into play. The deck is designed around downloading: AMS, Assign Support Personnel, Quark's Isolinear Rods, and Defend Homeworld to download personnel, Spacedoor to download ships, Obelisk of Masaka to download Masaka Transformations to get new cards, and Q the Referee to download important cards that guard against a variety of potent strategies.

The affiliation: Klingons and Romulans can both make effective use of AMS, but for variety of downloadable skills and mission selection, the Federation is the best choice.

The missions:

Explore Dyson Sphere  
Repair Mission  
Reported Activity  
Cargo Rendezvous  
Test Mission II  
Investigate Anomaly II

The first four are engineering based missions that provide a variety of

two-mission combinations for 100 points while being protected from theft by Fair Play. In addition, only two or three personnel are needed to meet the mission requirements so that it is possible to attempt on the first turn yet remain immune to Lack of Preparation. The last two missions give us two extra outposts to accompany the one that will be seeded at one of the space missions (Explore Dyson Sphere or Repair Mission). With an aggressive mission attempting strategy, it is best to always be near an outpost so that the needed personnel are immediately available for the next mission attempt. Those outposts also provide some protection against attack decks and the low point values do not hinder a deck with as much scoring potential as this one has.

### **Dilemmas:**

In the Pale Moonlight  
Dead End

In the Pale Moonlight  
Hide and Seek  
Dead End

Ferengi Infestation  
Chula: The Chandra  
Friendly Fire

Ferengi Infestation  
Denevan Neural Parasites  
New Essentialists

Strict Dress Code  
Berserk Changeling  
Maglock

Ferengi Infestation  
Dal'Rok  
Friendly Fire

These dilemmas are coordinated to stop a quick mission solving deck; particularly one that reports a lot of personnel quickly and then throws personnel at the mission. It is also designed to accompany Beware of Q, which is used to swap a Q-Flash for one of the first two dilemmas allowing the last dilemma to stop the mission attempt. The Hide and Seek can be seeded as a hidden agenda in case Q-bypass is suspected. The Dead End combinations should be seeded as far from each other as possible so that the opponent encounters only one of those combinations. A second encountered Dead End is worthless.



**Other seeds:**

Space Time Portal x 2  
Q-Flash  
Beware of Q  
Q's Tent  
Q the Referee x 2  
Defend Homeworld  
Quark's Isolinear Rods  
Assign Support Personnel  
Assign Mission Specialists  
Federation Outpost  
Spacedoor

**Q Flash:**

Hide and Seek  
Q-Type Android  
Penalty Box x 2  
I Tried to Warn You  
Mandarin Bailiff  
Fightin' Words

By using Beware of Q to swap a Q-Flash for dilemma that is about to be passed, this Q-Flash changes a wall dilemma (one that cannot be passed without meeting certain requirements) into one that removes important personnel from the mission attempt.

**Q's Tent:**

New Essentialists  
Q-Flash  
Q's Planet  
The Devil  
Wormhole  
Scan  
Full Planet Scan  
Res-Q  
Dr. Soong  
The Albino  
Thomas Paris  
Jareh-Inyo  
Jo'Bril

Dr. Soong is used primarily to change android classifications if necessary. The other personnel have the skills to get past dilemmas that the downloadable personnel in the draw deck cannot get past. The Q-Flash is for swapping out

for a dilemma and Q's Planet gives us a place to put that personnel targeted by Q-type Android. The other cards in the tent will change depending on what types of decks we expect to encounter.

**The draw deck:**

Personnel:

Leah Brahms x 2  
Dr. Leah Brahms  
Christopher Hobson  
Toby Russell  
Narik  
Richard Wilkins  
Gibson  
Riva  
Sirna Kolrami  
Sir Isaac Newton  
Paxton Reese  
Amaros  
Ty Kajada  
Albert Einstein  
Enrique Muniz  
Suna  
Soong-type Android x 7

All of these personnel, except for the androids, can be downloaded. Together with the personnel in the Q's Tent side deck, they have all the skills necessary to pass any dilemma. There are seven Soong-type Androids because this is a large draw deck and seven is necessary in order to have two or three on the table a few turns into the game.

**Other draw cards:**

Darmok x 2  
U. S. S. Nebula  
Assign Mission Specialists x 8  
Palor Toff x 7  
Q's Tent x 10  
Kevin Uxbridge x 5  
Masaka Transformations x 5  
Obelisk of Masaka x 2  
Temporal Vortex  
The Wake of the Borg  
It's Only a Game  
Reactor Overload  
Fair Play

Intermix Ratio  
The Big Picture  
Reflection Therapy  
Alternate Universe Doorway

Of these cards, only AMS, Palor Toff, Q's Tent, and Kevin Uxbridge cannot be downloaded, hence the large number of each. AMS and Q's Tent are crucial to this deck. Palor Toff might not be crucial, but it is very handy because after only a couple turns, it becomes a wild card. It is used primarily to retrieve AMS, Assign Support Personnel, and Q's Tent. Kevin Uxbridge is completely optional and could be replaced by a different Interrupt depending on what types of decks are likely to be faced.

### **The play:**

The deck has been played most effectively as follows. The outpost, Spacedoor, and the initial mission specialists (Dr. Leah Brahms and Christopher Hobson) are played at Explore Dyson Sphere. On the first turn, if there is a Q's Tent in the opening hand, Q's Planet is played. On the second turn, the Spacedoor is flipped over to download a Darmok, which is given a holodeck, and Assign Support Personnel is discarded to download Amaros to the Darmok. We now have the skill requirements for Explore Dyson Sphere in play, ready to attempt, regardless of the opening card draw. From here on, continue attempting and downloading personnel until the game is over. If we happen to have a couple of Q's Tents in our hand, then it is worthwhile to use one to obtain a Scan or Full Planet Scan. Those cards will save at least a turn, but they should not be relied upon. Mission attempting should proceed regardless of whether the mission has been scanned.

## **Tournament Decks: Dominion Solver**

### **The Dominion at the World Championships**

By Brian Sykes  
2000 World Runner-Up

### **Missions**

Construct Depot  
Intelligence Operation  
Investigate Rumors  
Quest for the Sword  
Rescue Founder  
Tulaberry Wine Negotiations

### **Other Seeds**

Q's Tent  
Q-Flash  
Space-Time Portal  
Assign Mission Specialists  
Assign Support Personnel  
Beware of Q  
Defend Homeworld  
HQ: Secure Homeworld  
Q The Referee x2  
Subjugate Planet  
Primary Supply Depot  
Jem'Hadar Birthing Chamber  
Ketracel-White  
Kukalaka  
The Great Link

### **Personnel**

Amet'alox  
Azet'izan  
Bashir Founder  
Borath  
Deyos  
Dr. Farek  
Founder  
Founder Leader  
Goran'Agar  
Gurat'urak  
Kira Founder  
Lovok Founder  
Narik  
O'Brien Founder  
Temo'Zuma  
Varat'idan x2  
Young Jem'Hadar x3

### **Ships**

Dominion Battleship x2

### **Dilemmas**

Alien Parasites  
Barclay's Protomorphosis  
Disease  
Berserk Changeling  
Chula: The Dice  
Dal'Rok  
Dead End  
Friendly Fire  
In the Pale Moonlight  
Maglock  
Oops!  
Sarjenka  
Scientific Method  
Seismic Quake  
Unscientific Method

### **Events**

Intermix Ratio  
Kivas Fajo - Collector x2  
Masaka Transformations  
Revolving Door

### **Incidents**

Obelisk of Masaka  
Q The Referee

### **Interrupts**

Amanda Rogers x3  
Extraordinary Methods x2  
Kevin Uxbridge  
Oof!  
Palor Toff - Alien Trader x2  
Scorched Hand  
Victory Is Life

### **Objectives**

## Reflection Therapy

### **Doorways**

Alternate Universe Door

Q's Tent x2

### **Q's Tent**

Espionage - Dominion on Romulan	<b>Q-Continuum</b>
Distortion of Space/Time Continuum	Fightin' Words
It's Only A Game	Hide and Seek
Ketracel-White	I Tried To Warn You
Masaka Transformations	Mandarin Bailiff x2
Mirror Image	Penalty Box x2
Obelisk of Masaka	Q's Planet
Operate Wormhole Relays	Q-Type Android x2
Plasmadyne Relay	
Q-Flash	
Regenerate	
Temporal Vortex	
Weyoun	

### **Introduction and Overview of the Deck**

This is the deck I used at Day 2 and Day 3 of the world championships. This particular list is the version I used on day 3. On Day 2 I was 6-2 with my 2 losses coming to an AMS/Scan deck played by John Bergman and a Senior Staff Meeting/ Romulan Mission Solver. With that in mind I learned from my mistakes and added the 3 Amanda Rogers. Best Decision I ever made... those things come in SO handy (except at local

tournaments when you lose 140-139 because you probed her for Dabo, but that's another story.) In addition I added the third young Jem'Hadar, as well as the O'Brien and Kira Founders and a 2<sup>nd</sup> Kivas Fajo-Collector.

The premise of the deck is simple: solve missions, and solve them quickly. The Dominion has a reputation of being an aggressive race with a bloodthirst for battle, and that actually gave me a psychological edge. More than once during the weekend, people were hesitant to venture out away from their homeworld for fear of being beaten down. That gave me the time I needed to get out and running. The mechanics (or "Tech" for you SWCCG Players) comes from your young Jem'Hadar. First turn discard Defend Homeworld to get Deyos. Then if you drew a young Jem'Hadar play him to the Birthing chamber for free. That is all you need to get massive card drawing going on. At the end of your turn swap in a normal Jemmie for your young Jemmie and get a card. Also you have 2 Obelisk/Masaka combinations to get exactly what you need in your hand. The cards you need to play as your card play are a Dominion Battleship, Borath, and Goran'Agar, plus any Kivas Fajos/Revolving Doors/Extra Jemmies/etc. Try to get the Dominion Battleship out as soon as possible, that way you can consolidate on the Founder Homeworld until you have your super-crew at full strength. Remember that Ketracel-white does not count down on the planet, so don't worry about hurrying. As soon as you have a Science personnel down (usually a founder that plays for free) and are consolidated at the Homeworld go on down and score 15 from the BPD/Sarjenka combo (Oh yeah, seed that at your Homeworld). For the guaranteed 2-mission win solve the Homeworld using HQ: Secure Homeworld, and then Solve Tulaberry Wine Negotiations using Subjugate Planet. (40+45+10+5=100). You also have the option of subjugating Quest for the Sword if you have the Victory is Life in Hand. Those quick 5 points will win you games.

### **Post-DCon/EP/Mirror Mirror Changes**

Well, as you all know, I lost the final confrontation at the world championships. Although many people say I should have canceled the Fightin' Words with Oof, the truth is, the game was lost before that due to an obscure ruling that neither myself nor my opponent was aware of that the judges rightfully pointed out. When a Q's planet is encountered in a Q-Flash, it must be inserted into the spaceline in the same quadrant as the mission where the flash was encountered. That being said, the first change I would make to this deck is to move the Q's Planet from the Flash to the Tent. I would also add another Q's Tent or 2 to the deck. That way, you can use a Q's tent to get a Q's planet early on and put it in the Gamma Quadrant where your opponent cannot get to it and you can solve when you're ahead of your opponent and over 100. In addition, getting the planet out early can be vicious when combined with Q-Type Android, especially if you are able to swap in the same flash under multiple missions. Which brings me to my next point: add at least 1 if not 2 more Palor Toffs to the deck. All throughout Day 2 and Day 3 of worlds there were multiple occasions where I REALLY wanted to fetch something out of my discard pile (especially in the final, though you might not know it). Another 2 Palor Toffs should help cure that.

I also played this same deck at the team tournament on Sunday of DCon, and I learned another valuable lesson if this deck is to be played in the current tourney scene.

The Bane of this deck consists of 2 new dilemmas, one of which I will discuss later. The other: Female's Love Interest/Radioactive Garbage Scow. For the first time ever, a Radioactive Garbage Scow can turn up at a planet, thus making the mission unattemptable. This would only be a minor annoyance if it weren't for a little-used card from Alternate Universe called Destroy Radioactive Garbage Scow (DRAGS for short). As I found out against Dave Bowling, this combo can wreck this deck as well as any deck that revolves around planet missions. The Solution? The same thing that allowed me to beat Scan/AMS and Senior Staff Meeting Decks: Amanda Rogers. This one interrupt can really pull you out of the fire. The deck list calls for 3, but I would add a 4<sup>th</sup> just in case you run into a heavy interrupt deck. That said, the deck is almost ready to play in the new tournament Environment. There is just one more new card to deal with.

The Mirror, Mirror expansion brought a whole new slew of characters and some interesting game mechanics. However, it did not do much to help or hinder this deck, save one card: Denevan Neural Parasites. This dilemma is the biggest, best anti-super-crew dilemma in the game. Half of your away team is killed. Period. No conditions to meet, they just die. The only way to save them is to have plenty of phasers, disruptors, or Bodyguards hanging around. As of right now, there are no bodyguards in the deck. However, Amat'igan might fit the bill quite nicely, as he allows you to draw a card with Deyos when he reports. The only other thing I can suggest is adding about 5-6 Hand disruptors, as they are about the only thing that can save you, unless you want to play with multiple copies of Krozh, or Ruk (Ruk is SO cool, but I digress). So if this dilemma is in your meta, be very careful when attempting missions. That said, I still believe that this deck can perform on the top level. It was a machine when I was introduced to it, and it is still a machine today; you just have to be a little more careful and you will be very successful. Good Luck.

Design Credits go to Robert Corbett for introducing me to the deck and Jason Drake for the initial design and the personal attention and help he gave me the night before day 3. Thank you very much, Robert and Jason.

## **Tournament Decks: Holograms**

### **Lions and Tigers and Holos, Oh My!**

By Steve Boyles

Take a look around at the current environment. Destroy Radioactive Garbage Scow decks en masse. Loads of powerful attrition dilemmas such as A Fast Ship Would Be Nice, Q-type Android, Denevan Neural Parasites, or Kelvan Show of Force. An occasional Anti-Time Anomaly pops up. Even a smattering of smackdown or capture decks.

It seems that dealing with inevitable personnel loss has simply become a part of the game. Naturally, players aren't satisfied with that. Why stock extra personnel that consume card plays and deck slots -- or expend other resources on things like Genetric Replicator -- if there's a possible way

around it? So, that's the question: is there an easy way around the loss of personnel?

The answer is yes. One often-overlooked group of personnel are holograms, who are immune to most forms of destruction. If they are killed, they simply deactivate and are ready for use again next turn. Or, if they move away from the location of a ship where they're at, they deactivate and return to the ship. The latter is particularly useful against dilemmas like Love Interests and Q-Type Android or against capturing decks; simply move your ship to a different location, and the hologram returns to your ship, escaping any captors or "trap" cards like Mandarin Bailiff. Holograms are also essentially immune to cards like Mysterious Orb.

The next question? Can a viable hologram deck be built? Up until Rules of Acquisition came out, a hologram deck type that combined heavy usage of holograms with Anti-Time Anomalies was sometimes seen. The holograms simply deactivate when the Anomaly goes off, devastating your opponent's personnel ranks while leaving yours virtually unscathed. And, well played, these decks succeeded. Jason Drake went undefeated in seven games at a 1998 World Championship qualifier with such a deck, victorious over a field of nearly fifty. A seat at the 1999 World Championships was also won by a hologram-Anomaly deck.

Well, the Writ of Accountability card brought that deck, which relied on multiple Anomalies, to a screeching halt. If the opponent started rebuilding after the first Anomaly, playing a second one meant risking an automatic forfeit. And thus, hologram decks faded once more into oblivion. However, The Troubles with Tribbles expansion changed that. How? Namely, the release of Assign Support Personnel (ASP) and Defend Homeworld (DH) allowed a hologram player to assemble four holograms without expending a card play -- two from Assign Mission Specialists (AMS), and one each from ASP and DH. Coupled with a Treaty and the powerful Chief O'Brien from Blaze of Glory, a quick all-hologram mission-attempting team could be formed.

The most successful of these seeded Treaty: Federation/Romulan with Open Diplomatic Relations, and chose Dr. Leah Brahms, Sir Isaac Newton, Albert Einstein, and Chief O'Brien as its four holograms. Not only did you have a number of important skills, such as SECURITY, multiple ENGINEER, and Navigation, but it was also possible to choose a tight mission selection that could be solved with just holograms and one Computer Skill. (See the sample deck at the end of this article for an example of such a mission selection).

Another lesser-played option is to use a Treaty: Romulan/Klingon and multiple K'Tesh and Tomek holograms, downloading Jera and Chief O'Brien with ASP and DH, and stocking several AMS cards in the draw deck to grab extra



K'Teshes and Tomeks as needed. This also allows a tight mission selection involving the staple high-point Romulan space missions: Explore Typhone Expanse, Study Lonka Pulsar, and Investigate "Shattered Space" with the assistance of one Leadership and one Computer Skill, among other missions.

Of course, while holograms make mighty fine redshirts, there are some dilemmas you just can't redshirt through. Against wall dilemmas, you'll need to have some non-holograms to back them up. Back in the days of unlimited Anti-Time Anomalies, this wasn't much of a problem. Wall dilemmas were fewer, and if your opponent ever started to rebuild, you could play another Anomaly. However, the abundance of walls in the modern metagame and the huge number of ways to report personnel for free mean that you can't take your time in reporting your non-holograms.

There are a number of options for getting who you need. In the Romulan/Klingon version mentioned above, you can use the AMS included in the draw deck for ready access to K'Tesh and Tomek to grab other mission specialists with skills needed for walls or missions, such as Mopak or Kromm.

Another option available to all affiliations is the STP-drop, which discards a Space-Time Portal from the table to report an [AU] ship with any number of [AU] crew, limited only by Energy Vortex (rarely played) or It's Only a Game (IOAG). IOAG may seem threatening, but you can still play a ship and four personnel for free, with a lot of freedom on whom you report. There's still no better deal in the game.

If you're playing one of the aforementioned Treaty decks, you have a \*lot\* of good [AU] personnel to choose from, especially if the Federation is included. The Feds have a vast smorgasbord of personnel to choose from, having the bulk of Original Series personnel. In fact, the Federation/Romulan [AU] selection is so large that it's still practical to impose another requirement on your personnel: a large amount of Music, which can be used to power a Ressian Flute to make up any point losses during the game, or to hit 100 with just two missions.

Seeing how the STP-drop is probably the fastest way to get cards into play, it makes sense to further capitalize on the speed by doing the drop early in the game. A successful Federation/Romulan deck combining most of the above strategies was developed by Jason Drake, which placed third on Day One of the 2000 World Championships. After giving Jason advice while he built the deck, I grew attracted to it as well and have since played variations of it twice in local tournaments. (More on the deck's actual performance later.)

The deck has a large proportion of [AU] personnel, usually fifty percent or more, along with a good number of Kivas Fajo -- Collectors (KFCs) to draw cards quickly. The deck would do the standard download of the four

holograms with AMS, ASP, and DH. Card plays would go to KFC until a good number of [AU] personnel and an [AU] ship are in the hand. In my experience with the deck, I usually do the STP-drop on the second turn, although I've done it as late as turn three and as early as the first turn of the game.

If your opponent flips IOAG, you still get four personnel with valuable skills for passing walls your holograms can't overcome. If your opponent didn't stock IOAG, all the better: I've reported up to nine personnel for free in a STP-drop with this deck.

The effect of the deck's speed is enhanced even further because you don't have to worry about your mission requirements. One Computer Skill is very easy to get, and as long as you keep your holograms from dying (not very hard), everybody else is essentially expendable. When attempting missions, I usually go with the four holograms, and maybe one real person if I'm worried about Lack of Preparation. The holograms tear through killer dilemmas, and you're never attempting with more than seven or eight personnel at a time, so losses to The Higher... the Fewer are also limited.

Ferengi Infestation is no problem, seeing as how Newton and Einstein have eleven CUNNING each, with Dr. Brahms showing a strong nine. Add Chief O'Brien, and you've got 36 CUNNING and one SECURITY already. What about Q-Flash cards? Holograms deactivate upon selection for Penalty Box or Q-type Android, can be retrieved if captured with Mandarin Bailiff (see the third paragraph), and are universal cards for Hide and Seek. Jason Drake reported that during one game with this deck at the World Championships, he solved three missions and won with a Fightin' Words on the table.

What you end up with is an incredibly fast deck. The three keys to winning in modern STCCG are drawing lots of cards quickly, playing lots of cards quickly, and attempting missions quickly. Granted, there are some exceptions with specialty decks, but you'll do very well if you can build a deck that combines all three well. Combine a good card drawing engine (Kivas is the most basic, but others like Cargo Running or Guardian of Forever can work as well) with STP-dropping (the fastest way to get a wide variety of personnel and a ship into play) and the ability to start attempting missions immediately without fear of losing your mission requirements and tear through dilemmas right and left, and you have yourself a very nice deck.

The following deck is an example of the Federation/Romulan holo-deck that's most commonly played. Strategy notes follow the deck list.

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Free Seeds (12)

Mission (6)

Cargo Rendezvous  
Explore Dyson Sphere  
Investigate Disappearance  
Repair Mission  
Reported Activity  
Sensitive Search

Site (6)  
Security Holding Cell x6

Seed Deck (30)

Artifact (1)  
Ressikan Flute

Dilemma (13)  
Cosmic String Fragment (self-seeded)  
Chula: the Chandra  
Friendly Fire  
Scientific Method  
Dal'Rok  
Dead End x2  
Chula: the Lights x2  
New Essentialists  
Ferengi Infestation x2  
Cytherians

Doorway (5)  
Battle Bridge Door  
Q's Tent  
Space-Time Portal x3

Event (1)  
Treaty: Federation/Romulan

Facility (2)  
Federation Outpost  
Romulan Outpost

Incident (4)  
Obelisk of Masaka  
Q the Referee x2  
Quark's Isolinear Rods

Objective (4)

Assign Mission Specialists  
Assign Support Personnel  
Defend Homeworld  
Open Diplomatic Relations

Draw Deck (32)

Personnel (17)

Albert Einstein  
Ambassador Tomalak  
Beverly Picard  
Chief O'Brien  
Commander Data  
Dr. Leah Brahms  
Garak  
Ian Andrew Troi  
Jack Crusher  
Lt. Nagata  
Lt. Sulu  
Lt. Watley  
Mr. Spock  
Rachel Garrett  
Sir Isaac Newton  
The Traveler  
T'Shonra

Ship (3)

Future Enterprise x2  
Starship Enterprise

Doorway (4)

Q's Tent x3  
Temporal Vortex

Event (6)

The Big Picture  
Kivas Fajo - Collector x4  
Mirror Image

Interrupt (1)

Going to the Top

Objective (1)

Operate Wormhole Relays

Q's Tent (13)

Personnel (7)

Admiral Leyton

Admiral McCoy

The Albino

Selveth

Senator Letant

Marouk

Suna

Dilemma (1)

New Essentialists

Doorway (1)

Alternate Universe Door

Event (2)

Holo-Projectors

Masaka Transformations

Interrupt (1)

Wormhole

Objective (1)

Reflection Therapy

Battle Bridge (4)

Tactic (4)

"Crimson Forcefield" x2

Evasive Maneuvers x2

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Many aspects of this deck are customizable, and I recommend that, should you choose to play this deck, you consider your local environment and change the deck accordingly. The deck above is a pretty good general-use version.

Ideally, play a KFC for each of the first two turns, using Obelisk of Masaka to download Masaka Transformations if needed. Then, do the STP-drop. Put the holograms on the ship dropped, possibly with a real personnel. Start going after missions as soon as possible, usually on the second turn. Solve a space mission first, Tent for Holo-Projectors, and then go do a planet where you seeded a Ressian Flute for 100 points free and clear of The Big Picture.

Some specific things that might need explanation:

Security Holding Cell: These are actually optional. I include them because any deck can include six sites for free. I found them superior to traditional choices like Ops and Docking Pylons because this deck is very weak at battling, and stands very little chance of commandeering a Nor. So, I used six universal sites that the opponent will probably not be able to make use of. Even if the opponent is playing a capturing deck, the truly essential personnel (the holograms) can be retrieved easily with the "move the ship away" trick. What's the benefit? One of this deck's biggest weaknesses is battle. Many battle decks try to "out-seed" you in the facility phase by using a Nor. By seeding sites, such players hope that you'll be forced to seed a facility of your own, which the opponent follows up by seeding an outpost directly across from (or next to) yours. By keeping a battling opponent guessing, there's a better chance the opposing outpost will be farther away. Also, it adds an element of confusion to the deck, which never hurts.

Battle Bridge Door: Definitely keep it in a battle-heavy environment. The "Crimson Forcefields" are excellent against decks using a 4-card battle bridge with two Maximum Firepowers and two "Crimson Forcefields" aiming for one-shot destruction of your ship. Unless the opponent's ship has an OFFICER with CUNNING 9 or higher (very unlikely, especially if that ship was STP-dropped), you can nullify the Maximum Firepower. From here, there are probably just one or two Tactics left in the opponent's deck. Dock your ship and do everything in your power to keep your opponent from damaging it again. With only two Tactics left in the opponent's Battle Bridge, you may keep any more of your ships from being destroyed from lack of damage markers. Your opponent probably needs a second ship to hit your docked, damaged ship, which hopefully gives this speedy deck time to win, or at least solve a mission. Evasive Maneuvers are general-purpose defense cards. However, in an area like mine where few players play battle, I've found it's better to ditch the Battle Bridge in favor of an additional dilemma, usually Oops!, which gives me more versatility against an Empok Nor.

The Traveler: A waste of an [AU] personnel? Hardly. Both times I've played this deck I've made good use of this often-overlooked personnel. For one, he's an excellent way out of Cytherians. If you have a Tent to spare, you can get the Wormhole and, together with The Traveler, return right back to where you started without missing a beat. At the very least, you can get to the end of the spaceline where you can cloak. The Traveler is also useful for evading armadas.

Future Enterprise: If you don't have two of these cards (or any at all), you can substitute the Pasteur or Decius for either or both of them. Be sure

you increase the number of Romulan [AU] personnel in the deck if you include the Decius — you have to meet its staffing requirements when STP-dropping, which includes a personnel of matching affiliation.

The Big Picture: This card is vital for this deck. Because it plans on solving a planet and space mission already, you can pull this out if an opponent happens to outspeed you by sticking only to planets or space missions. Especially with a deck this fast, anything you can do to delay an opponent from winning is good.

Mirror Image: I sometimes swap this for Intermix Ratio. It depends on the metagame.

Going to the Top: Very useful for accessing the Admirals and Senators in the Q's Tent at a moment's notice. Download Admiral McCoy if you need MEDICAL; Admiral Leyton if you need SECURITY or a Federation personnel with Treachery for In the Pale Moonlight (Garak also works for this, and is in the main deck). Senator Letant also has SECURITY, but you'll probably want to retrieve him with Quark's Isolinear Rods instead of using your only Going to the Top unless you need him immediately. Marouk is downloaded in case of Executive Authorization.

Some may notice that this deck contains no Mirror, Mirror cards. This is actually because even though I've played the deck after the expansion released, my boxes hadn't arrived yet, but the deck still managed to pull second. Feel free to add new personnel or dilemmas if you think it would strengthen the deck, but they are by no means necessary for the deck to still be competitive.

Well, this all sounds mighty fine in theory, but how has this deck done in real tournament performance? As mentioned before, Jason Drake placed third with this deck on Day One of the 2000 World Championships, and ended up fourteenth or fifteenth on Day Two. What beat the deck? Battle in each of the three cases. The addition of The Traveler and a Battle Bridge help alleviate these concerns somewhat, but battle is still a big threat. There are probably better decks to use if battle is popular where you play. James Monsebroten played it on Day Three, and actually ended up last. He had the misfortune of playing all three players who beat the deck on Day Two (all battle decks), as well as losing to a Q-Bypass deck.

Although its success at Worlds was only mild, I've done well with it in local tournaments, probably because battle is a much smaller factor. I've played it twice, placing second each time. The first tournament had eight participants, and I lost once in the first round to another speed deck that was able to delay me long enough with a clever combo involving Tribbles and

a Q-Flash (require 2 Exobiology with 10,000 Tribbles, then use Q-type Android to remove your Exobiology personnel) to win. The second time, there were twenty-one participants, and its only loss was again in the first round to a point-deprivation deck. All of my planets were hit by The Sheliak within turns, plus all my missions had the combo Radioactive Garbage Scow seeded at them, with plenty of Destroy Radioactive Garbage Scow to either kill personnel or reduce mission points further. I actually could have won this game, but I made a big mistake with an Edo Probe that cost me victory. Out of the other seven games I've played with this deck, five have been 100-0 wins, one was 100-4, and the other was 100-90.

What lesson can be learned from this? I think the most important determinant of how well this deck does is the amount of battle decks that are being played. In an area where mission solving is more popular, this deck is fast enough to beat almost all of them. However, if your local players are fond of battle, there are probably better choices. The one weak point of the holograms is that the ship you're projecting them from has to remain uncloaked. You can dock it, but you can't take advantage of a cloaking device to hide.

All in all, this deck is an excellent illustration of what happens when several strategies complement each other well. The speed in mission-solving the holograms provide matches up well with the speed in getting "disposable" personnel for walls given by the STP-drop.

The other great thing about this deck is that it's something interesting to play that's still competitive. It adds variety to the tournament scene, making the game more than yet another matchup of Terran Empire free-report versus Romulan free-report. It uses a game mechanic that's rarely used -- each tournament I've played this deck in I realize something else that holograms are good for, whether it be dodging personnel battles or avoiding assimilation. On a more practical note, most games with this deck are short, with a typical game lasting twenty minutes or less. This is a definite plus in long tournaments, because you can save some of your mental energy for later rounds.

Before I end, I'll add two caveats about holograms: First, never end a turn without a real personnel aboard the ship your holograms are on. A single intruder -- whether Devidian Door-ed, reported directly there like Sloan or Kavok, or brought there by any other means -- alone on a ship can erase all holograms associated with that ship. If you don't stock counters for Rogue Borg Mercenaries, it's probably a good idea to never leave the ship without a real personnel aboard, even during your own turn. A second, similar warning: Never end a turn with an all-hologram Away Team on a planet. One Deactivation later, you'll really be hurting. Losing the holograms in a deck like this is a quick route to losing the game. Protect



them!

I think by now it's been shown that holograms are one of the leading defenses against the rising number of personnel deaths in the game. Although the Federation/Romulan deck spotlighted in this article may not fare well against battle decks, others may be more easily adapted this way by focusing less on speed and more on defense, such as by adding more ships. Give holograms a try sometime. Trust me, despite what some Delta Quadrant races think, "photonics" can be a powerful weapon in the arsenal of a good player.

## Concepts

Tournaments are often decided by which player has the better grasp of certain concepts which can give his deck a powerful edge. Just as a newbie will have no clue how to defeat a Q-bypass deck, many players may be unsure of how best to use or counter certain strategies. In this section, we present an overview of some of the most popular ones.

### Concepts: Bluffing

#### **The Queen of Hearts and a Poker Face**

By Steve Boyles

Although many games are won by one player simply having a better deck than the other, a number of games also have a significant mental battle as well. Confusion and misdirection play a key role in trying to win this aspect of the game. The less sure your opponent is about your strategy, the better a position you are in. This article will list a number of techniques you can use to do this, some being more resource-intensive than others.

Regardless, I'll state here that I think it's completely inappropriate to try to distract your opponent with idle chit-chat and such techniques. Distracting your opponent with something within the game itself is something completely different, and I find it perfectly acceptable to confuse your opponent within the realm of gameplay.

I'll list a couple of general guidelines about misdirection, with some practical examples following them:

- 1) The more cards you have on the table, the better. The more stuff there is, the better the chance your opponent will overlook something. A good

opponent won't be fazed by this, so don't go to too much trouble here. Your goal is to hope that an opponent will miss something at a quick glance. Some opponents may also be slightly intimidated at seeing most of the space in front of you filled up after the first turn of the game.

- There are some ways to get more cards on the table without using any extra resources. Let's say you're playing a Federation-only deck, and you seed Sherman's Peak. Even if you have no intention of using it, download an Organian Peace Treaty anyway. After all, it won't hurt you. But then again, it doesn't cost you anything either, and it gets you an extra card on the table. Same goes with Emblem cards and The Art of Diplomacy. Besides, in the latter case, even if you weren't planning on using The Art of Diplomacy, you never know when it might come in handy.

- Instead of seeding a card regularly, seed a card which downloads it if possible. For example, never seed Bajoran Wormhole: Mirror Universe. Instead, seed Ultimatum, which lets you download the Wormholes anyway. It has exactly the same effect with the same cost, except that you get an extra card sitting on the table.

- If you seed both Disrupt Alliance and Search for Rebels, download two different Emblem cards even if you are only using one, or even if you aren't playing either Terran Empire or Klingon-Cardassian Alliance. It costs you nothing, but it'll confuse your opponent as to which affiliation you're playing and it will get more cards on the table.

- Here's a technique that requires absolutely no changes to a deck. When you seed multiples of a card (e.g., Space-Time Portal), or when you seed hidden agendas, don't stack them together to minimize space. Rather, spread them out to \*maximize\* the amount of space they take on the table. Although you have the same number of cards on the table, it appears that you have more. Also, the opponent has to scan across more cards to see what you have, instead of glancing at just one corner.

2) The less certain your opponent is about what affiliation you're playing, the better. This is particularly important during the early seed phases. Different affiliations attempt different missions first, and good players seed dilemmas accordingly. And, if nothing else, your opponent will spend some time thinking about what you're trying to do, making it harder for an opponent to formulate a plan to counter your deck.

- Mission selection is probably the easiest way. Especially if you're using cards like Fair Play or HQ: Defensive Measures, it's often better -- all other things being equal -- to choose missions with multiple affiliation icons. This works even better with cross-quadrant affiliations, like Cardassians and Dominion. If almost all of your missions have both

affiliation icons, it'll be hard to tell what you're playing. Another example: in an armada deck, I once seeded four Impose Order missions and two Survey Star Systems. Combined with seeding Ultimatum (done to download Bajoran Wormhole; more on this tactic later), it was unclear whether I was playing Klingon, Cardassian, Dominion, or some combination of the above.

- Seeding cards typically associated with a particular affiliation also works. For example, many players instantly think "Dominion!" when an Ultimatum comes out. Ultimatum is also useful for downloading Bajoran Wormholes, so this may not work as much. Others are much more blatant and work much better. HQ: Secure Homeworld is a great example. Seed it on Intelligence Operation, and who would ever guess you're playing Romulan or Cardassian? Another excellent card for this is seedable Treaties. One tactic successfully used by Brad DeFruiter at the 1998 World Championships was to seed a Treaty: Federation/Bajoran when he was actually playing Borg.

- In general, the Borg have the most to gain from affiliation misdirection. The Borg have different mission-scouting patterns (for example, starting at the end of the spaceline) and it's often best to re-arrange your dilemma combos against a Borg deck. In a Borg deck I played, I once seeded Establish Dominion Foothold and HQ: Secure Homeworld on Intelligence Operation. Nobody suspected I was playing Borg until it was too late.

- Another option is to make the opponent think you're playing Borg when you really aren't, using the above logic in reverse. Back when Borg decks doing two dual-icon missions was the rage, on more than one occasion I seeded both Tarchannen Study and Runabout Search in my Federation decks. A number of players thought I was playing Borg, and seeded more heavily under those two missions, meaning fewer (or easier) dilemmas under the rest of my missions. This doesn't work as well anymore since Borg players can only scout those missions once. A tactic that works well today is to seed Espionage Mission and Secret Salvage, feigning a Stop First Contact deck. Be cautioned, however, that Espionage Mission is easily stolen by Romulans, so you may need to self-seed to defend it.

### 3) Miscellaneous tricks

- The old "pretend I have a Scorched Hand" trick. Even if you don't have a Scorched Hand in your deck, you can still request that your opponent count his hand. This is a tried-and-true tactic that still works as well as ever.

To get maximum effectiveness, keep track of how many cards your opponent has in the hand right from the start. When your opponent is right at twelve cards, pop the question. If all goes well, your opponent will take all sorts of measures to stop drawing cards to avoid going over twelve. Keep the pressure on by asking whenever the hand's at eleven or twelve again. This works well, even against world-class players. At the 1999 World

Championships, I got one player to stop processing ore, Kevin his own Traveler, and Devidian Door a few personnel he didn't really want to just to reduce his hand size. At a local tournament, I got another several-time World Finalist to stop using Deep Space 9 to draw oodles of cards.

- There are a number of tricks involving the seed phase. For instance, even during the dilemma phase, take all the cards you're going to be seeding later on (including facilities) and stick them in your hand as well. Your opponent won't know how many dilemmas you have left, so your opponent may be more nervous about self-seeding, especially if you start passing. Note: this trick will backfire with double-sided cards. If you are using them, place them (and one or two others cards) face-down in a pile on the table, keeping the rest in your hand.

- When seeding dilemmas, never make piles of the combos in front of each mission (except when using another trick mentioned later). You don't want your opponent to know when it's safe to self-seed. Instead, keep them all in your hand. It takes practice to develop this skill, but it's well worth learning. It's easier at first to arrange them left-to-right in your hand and seed in that order, but eventually you'll want to be seeding in what is essentially a random order. If you can keep track of what's being seeded where without your opponent having the same knowledge, you'll do very well.

- You can, however, make piles of dilemmas if you want to confuse your opponent. For instance, make all of your piles two cards each. Your opponent may start self-seeding after you've seeded your two, thinking it's safe. In reality, you're holding the third dilemma of each combo in your hand, allowing you to out-seed your opponent.

- Another similar trick involving dilemma piles is to take seeds like facilities and hidden agendas, and place them on the bottom of your dilemma combos. After you've seeded all your real dilemmas, start passing. A self-seeding opponent will be hesitant to self-seed with another dilemma waiting. Better yet, some opponents may try to be sneaky and pass as well, ending the seed phase. Although it may appear that you got the short end of the bargain, losing six "dilemmas" to one or two of the opponent, in reality your opponent has placed a few dilemmas out of play while you are still free to seed your facilities and hidden agendas during the facility phase.

- One more seeding trick. If you plan to self-seed an artifact under the last mission you intend to complete -- for example, a Ressikan Flute for the win -- seed it \*immediately.\* Hope that your opponent will put a Dead End or similar dilemma there, trying to keep you from it in the early game. By the time you reach it, you plan on having over fifty points anyway, so it will have no effect -- plus, it will keep the Dead End away from the mission you actually intend on doing first.

Lastly, I'll recommend that you keep a straight face while playing. It may be more difficult for some to maintain a "poker face," but it will do well too. You don't want to look too relieved when you draw a good card, because an opponent might see that and play Masaka Transformations on you. You also don't want to look too disappointed at a bad turn events. Even if your ship is destroyed, or you simply made a mistake that really hurts, keep a straight face. You don't want your opponent to think you're beaten quite yet, even if you've made a move that put you into a losing position.

Now, it is true that few of these tricks will win you games in and of themselves, especially against a skilled opponent. You can't build a deck based on just little tricks and expect to win. Rather, the purpose of these tricks is to give you an edge in close games, giving you time to increase your differential or maybe even come back from what should have been a loss. As such, you shouldn't spend too much time or too many cards trying to fool your opponent. Bluffing shouldn't be one of a deck's key points, because you won't always fool everyone. It should simply be another weapon in your deck's arsenal -- useful, but not vital, and certainly not important enough that it can detract from the rest of your deck. Don't weaken a deck significantly just to try to fool your opponent.

Two more warnings. One: For obvious reasons, don't get so caught up in trying to fool your opponent that you lose track of your own deck. Two: Never lose sight of the fact that it's only a game, and never resort to poor sportsmanship. There's nothing wrong with a bluff, or similar card-related trick. There's a fine line between appropriate and inappropriate mind games. Don't try to distract your opponent with continual chatter. Don't follow the chess advice of Ruy Lopez ("Try to position the board such that the sun is in your opponent's eyes, and try to play your opponent after he has had a bit too much to eat and drink."), but try to distract your opponent using your deck and your cards.

Keep these guidelines in mind, and you may be able to pull the wool over a few of your opponents' eyes in a tournament. None of these tricks will make a good player out of a poor one, and they won't allow a bad deck to beat a good one. Their effectiveness is in tipping the balance of close games. Master them, and hopefully you'll gain the advantage you need to win.

**Concepts: Dilemma Busting**

**Dilemma Busting**

By Ted Witt

This article has two parts. First, a quick look into dilemma theory—what types of dilemmas are out there, how they work in combinations, and a quick look at some of the most potent dilemma strategies in the game today. Then, after I've shown you how to build some of the most potent combinations in the game, that will surely win you games and tournaments, you'll want to know how to beat them, won't you? Dilemma busting!

Part one: dilemma theory.

Dilemmas are one of the most potent weapons any player has to build a good deck in Star Trek CCG. They are still the primary method of interacting with your opponent, your cards under your opponent's missions. Those fun things that go bump in the night and thwart red shirts; those strange "anomalies of the week"—horrible gaseous nebulae, temporal anomalies, weird things that stop you, maim you, or otherwise thwart your plans!

In the olden days of Star Trek CCG, dilemmas weren't particularly potent things. Their effects were too weak, their targets, too random. Things have changed a great deal! In today's environment you can find Garbage Scows over planets, beefy walls that will take a LOT of personnel, target killers that can remove your critical mission solvers, or worse! For a complete guide to dilemmas, their resolutions and effects, I **highly** recommend reading Major Rakal's Dilemmas Resolution Guide. It contains anything and everything you want to know about how a specific dilemma works.

I sort dilemmas into seven categories: Stoppers, Killers, Walls, Filters, Fates Worse than Death, Effects, and Self-seeds. Some dilemmas don't fit nicely into these categories; others might combine multiple effects (for example, a wall/killer—having both a killing effect and then sticking around to be a wall). Still others can serve multiple purposes given the proper circumstances (example, Q can be categorized as an Effect dilemma, but can also be used as a self-seed for the ominous and very powerful Q-bypass). But for the purpose of this article I'm going to classify the dilemmas into these seven categories...creativity and circumstance may cause you to have a different classification structure. Let me examine each of these briefly.

**Stoppers:** Stopper dilemmas stop the away team if they cannot overcome the requirements. These dilemmas do not stick around once encountered. They can be very potent delaying tactics, often buying you enough time to score points yourself. Examples of stoppers include, the powerful "extended" stopper Chula: The Game, Cytherians, Palukoo, Sleeper Trap, Worshipper, etc.

**Killers:** Killers kill—easy enough to classify. These dilemmas kill people or damage ships (which can also kill people with a Battle Bridge Side Deck to maximize effectiveness). What you want to take into consideration with killers is who or what a killer kills. Simple killers include Armus (which will automatically hit, but is completely random), to the much more effective "opponent's choice"—A Fast Ship Would be Nice, Shot in the Back, etc. Other killers will kill over time—Horta, Dal'Rok, Aphasia Device, Harvester Virus, etc. Another subcategory of killers are those that target specific

personnel; for example, Unscientific Method has the potential to eliminate science personnel. Others of this category specify lowest strength (Surprise Assault). A further subcategory of killers are the potent mass killers—dilemmas that can kill a large number of people or ships: the classic Borg Ship dilemma, Firestorm, and the nasty new Denevan Neural Parasites. A final hybrid category are the killer/walls: dilemmas that can both kill AND stick around for your opponent to hit again. For more on this category see walls below.

**Walls:** Wall dilemmas require certain things to get past—and they do not go away (the mission attempt cannot continue) until you have met those requirements. In general, wall dilemmas have increased in potency as the game has evolved, requiring more stringent combinations of things to get past, and adding killer effects as well. Basic walls include: Maglock, Dead End, Founder Secret, Ferengi Infestation, Clan People, Scientific Method, Executive Authorization, Primitive Culture, Emergency Conversion, In the Pale Moonlight, Q Gets the Point, etc. Wall/killers are those nasty dilemmas that can kill (or remove a personnel from immediate play) but stick around to do it again. They include: Alien Parasites, Berserk Changeling, New Essentialists, Gravimetric Distortions, Armus: Sticky Situation, Chula: The Lights, etc. Wall/Killers are some of my favorite dilemmas in the game.

**Filter:** Filters do exactly what the name says; they whittle larger away teams down to smaller portions, often setting up the effects of potent dilemmas following. Examples of filters dilemmas include many of the Chula dilemmas, with the very powerful Chula: the Chandra probably the archetypical filter dilemma in the game. Other examples include Hide and Seek, Blended, Garanian Bolites, Love Interests, and Ooby Dooby. A very potent subcategory of filters target specific personnel. These dilemmas filter out (either by killing or removing) a specific personnel. They often double as walls (requiring a specific characteristic to get past) or as killers (removing a specific classification or personnel). They often play a primary role in setting up combinations. Examples of these filters include: Hippocratic Oath, Unscientific Method, Make Us Go, Tarellian Plague Ship, etc.

**Fates Worse than Death:** These dilemmas don't exactly "kill" you or filter you or remove you from the game. What they do is apply some effect that keeps the personnel in the game, but often hampers or limits them so they are not nearly as effective. Examples include: Vantika's Neural Pathways, Abandon Ship!, DNA Metamorphosis, Quantum Singularity Lifeforms, Framed for Murder, etc.

**Effects:** Effect dilemmas are dilemmas that cause some effect to game play that doesn't exactly fit into another category. Examples include Q – with the effect of completely rearranging the spaceline; Altonian Brain Teaser – with the effect of stopping bonus points; Duonetic Field Generator will prevent beaming and taking off in a landed ship, Balancing Act; Ferengi Bug, Interphasic Plasma Creatures, Edo Probe, etc.

**Self-Seeds:** Self-seeds are dilemmas that more often than not are used as dilemmas to be encountered yourself. These are also other categories of dilemmas that contain bonus points to be collected. Self-seeded dilemmas can also be used to set up probe rigging, draw cards, or for other beneficent effects. Examples include the orb collector's best

friend (or anyone who doesn't want to get shut out 100-0) Sarjenka. Ooby Dooby (while technically a filter) can be self-seeded to draw cards. DNA Clues makes passing medical-requiring dilemmas easier. The infamous Q-bypass is most definitely a self-seed.

Of course, dilemmas don't usually come alone...they often work in combinations. And good combinations are essential to your success. This brief section on dilemma theory will focus on a few of the most potent strategies for success.

**Deprivation decks:** Deprivation decks work by combining wall dilemmas that require a specific characteristic to get past with both filters and killers that remove that characteristic. The idea behind deprivation decks is to require the same skill at every mission and do everything possible to eliminate that skill. Medical Deprivation decks are perhaps the most popular. Combinations include: Hippocratic Oath + Aphasia Device + Tarellian Plague Ship + Scientific Method. A Fast Ship Would be Nice can easily be substituted. Science deprivation decks are also popular: Scientific Method + Unscientific Method + Kelvan Show of Force. Officer Deprivation: Maglock + specific killer + Hazardous Duty. Or Hazardous Duty + Punishment Box.

**Point loss decks:** Point reduction decks use dilemmas and other cards that force a point reduction to delay the game. Dilemmas combos often include: Ferengi Infestation (or other beefy wall) + The Higher...The Fewer. Hazardous Duty + Kelvan Show of Force can set up another loss. Radioactive Garbage Scow (especially in its combo dilemma form) + the interrupt Destroy Radioactive Garbage Scow can be effective. Sheliak + Filter + Q often can reduce the potential points of a mission to zero. Hero of the Empire decks can often benefit tremendously by this strategy.

**Mass Killers:** These decks work simply by killing as many people as possible. Combinations include Ferengi Infestation (or other beefy wall) + Denevan Neural Parasites. Wall + Firestorm + In the Pale Moonlight can be both an effective killer and an effective delay. Wall + Filter + Alien Parasites + Wall/Killer. Borg Ships can always cause mass destruction, if you can catch your opponent without a Temporal Vortex.

**Random Walls:** The idea behind the random wall theory is to combine lots of different kinds of wall dilemmas in a concerted effort to prevent your opponent from getting through them. Using walls with varied and unusual requirements can be most effective. Chula: The Dice + Executive Authorization + Clan People. Quantum Fissure + Q Gets the Point + Chula the Door. The theory here is instead of focusing on a single type of wall to block your opponent; you use a large variety of different walls.

**Q-Flash:** Using the Q-Continuum side-deck and the Objective Beware of Q, a wise player can also maximize their dilemma effectiveness by allowing for some additional flexibility. Q side deck cards can be very potent...Q's Planet, Q-Type Android, Fightin' Words, Hide and Seek. These Q-cards can be utilized to increase the effectiveness of other strategies.



Part I conclusion, this first section of dilemma theory is to help you understand some of the more potent strategies and dilemmas in the game today. It is not designed to be a thorough or definitive guide to dilemma theory, but to help you understand your enemy!

Part II: Dilemma busting!

Now that we've looked at some of the dilemmas, how do you cope with them? How do you develop strategies to bust through your opponent's cards and score those points quickly? Let's look at some strategies.

### **General Deck Building Strategies:**

First, and this probably has less to do with dilemmas and more to do with building good decks for any affiliation, but your best tactic to cope with the dilemmas in the game today is to build decks that are focused. To choose missions that are focused. To have enough redundancy build into a deck that if something goes wrong and your opponent kills, maims, puts in stasis, captures, or does any number of other horrible things you'll still have the skills and characters to solve missions. Specifically, here are a couple of tricks to help you focus your deck.

- A. Stick to a theme. Choose missions that require the same sets of skills or classifications. Examples: the classic Romulan Treachery deck. MANY Romulan missions require treachery; if you lose a few you are still ok. The federation has many Engineer or Medical missions. The Dominion can construct multiple depots. Keeping focused will help you bust through dilemmas.
- B. Don't choose missions that require tons of attributes. Choose missions that can be solved by one or two people. Examples: Orb Negotiations requires simply orb personnel...and you should have several to choose from. Betazed Invasion, on the other hand, requires 3 officers, 5 security, hand weapons, and strength greater than 100. Which one looks easier?

Second, be prepared to steal whenever possible. This again may not seem like a good trick to bust through dilemmas, but it will make the number of dilemmas you will need to punch through considerably less. Espionage Mission, for example, is one of the easiest missions in the game to steal. If you are using a Tal Shiar or Obsidian Order based deck, consider throwing an Espionage on Federation card in the tent and seed dilemmas that you can easily get through faster than your opponent. Wormhole Negotiations is another easily targeted simple mission. Beware of Fair Play, but don't be afraid to try.

Third, consider contingency plans for scoring points. You may face a deck that will shut you out from solving enough missions. You may face a Q's Planet. You may have lost points. You may be locked behind a critical dead end and need to get past it. When you are building a deck, consider alternative methods to score points. A colony can be just the push you need to get over the top. The phoenix dropped at a headquarters is a simple ten points. Arbiter of Succession works wonders for the Klingons. Dabo! A self-seeded

dilemma with some bonus points. A drought tree. Give yourself extra options in case something goes astray from your primary plan.

### **Busting Dilemmas:**

At some point you do HAVE to be prepared to get through your opponent's dilemmas. Let's look at a few tricks to help you do that.

**Removal:** The simplest strategy might just be to remove those dilemmas without facing them. There are a few tricks that can help you to do that.

Senior Staff Meeting: This captain's order is perhaps your best weapon against dilemmas in space. You need to play the card just prior to your initial attempt at a space mission, and you need to have one of each of the primary classifications present. The result, the first dilemma seeded there is simply removed. Which is one less dilemma to punch through!

Ajur and Bortas: These two non-aligned aliens from the future each have a special skill that lets you, once per game (per alien), remove all but three seed cards from a planet if you can get them there alone with an archaeology personnel. Furthermore, you have the effect of randomizing those dilemmas that are there...so you can break up a well-ordered combo. Ajur and Bortas work best in combination with an archaeology themed deck (although anyone can benefit) and one of them can be downloaded by Defend Homeworld (since they're both security). You can increase your odds by self-seeding dilemmas under your target. Entire deck types (Hunt for DNA / Ajur/Bortas) have been built around this strategy.

Q-bypass (and Pla-Net). These last two strategies are considerably riskier since both would make you vulnerable to the game-ending powers of the Writ of Accountability. However, despite that risk, Q-bypass decks still show up in tournament play. The Q dilemma specifies that if you overcome it, you remove any remaining dilemmas under that mission. Strategy, self-seed one as the first dilemma, overcome it, and the mission is pretty much yours for free. But beware of the Writ!

**Personnel who nullify dilemmas:** This strategy of dilemma busting is to use personnel who have special skills that simply outright nullify your opponent's dilemmas. The catch is your opponent may not be using those dilemmas. (And, these personnel are an incentive to diversify which dilemmas you are using). Let's look at some of them:

Dr. McCoy: The good original series doctor from the Tribbles Expansion (alas, he is the ultra-rare) has the amazingly powerful special skill: "each turn, may nullify one dilemma requiring MEDICAL where present". Simply punch through those medical dilemmas by nullifying some of them outright. Since the Federation can treaty with every affiliation (except the Borg and the Ferengi, whom no one can treaty with) it might be worth including that treaty and the doctor just for the ability to take out Medical dilemmas.

Goran' Agar. Similarly to the good doctor, this Jem'Hadar who has broken his addiction to Ketracel White, can nullify Hippocratic Oath. While the doctor's special skill outshines our honorable Dominion friend, there was a time when medical deprivation was so hot that many affiliations would bend over backward JUST to include Goran' Agar in their decks for his special ability. While not as powerful today (mostly due to dilemma diversification) it is still a very powerful tactic.

Guinan: Guinan's special skill is almost as powerful as McCoy's: she may nullify any AU or Q icon interrupt, event or dilemma once per turn where present. Another difficult card to obtain (since she was found in the elusive Fajo collection) her special skill can bust down the effectiveness of the Q-Continuum side deck, and stop some of the powerful AU dilemmas (Conundrum and Quantum Singularity Lifeforms get the most play). Not nearly as often used as McCoy, she still can be quite flexible.

Robin Lefler: Nullifies Ktarian Game where present. OK. Like this will actually happen. I still thought it fun to mention! ☺

Lumba: May nullify any gender-related dilemmas. This one actually is very useful for the Ferengi, especially in light of the new Female's Love Interest/Garbage Scow combo dilemma. Potent in a Ferengi deck.

Each of these personnel (ok, except Lefler) might come in handy to nullify some of the most potent dilemmas in the game.

**Other cards that nullify or protect against dilemmas:** While not necessarily as potent as the personnel, a variety of cards can help you protect yourself from a variety of dilemmas.

Scans and Full Planet Scans: always better to know what is coming than to go in unprepared. And notice that the metagame has shifted away from punishing scans lately?

Guns: I'm not entirely sure how many dilemmas list guns as an alternate requirement...but it is quite a few. Most recently, guns are the only things that will protect you from the nastiness that is the Denevan Neural Parasites. My recommendation: use people that can download them. Fontaine can download two!

Equipment in general: while guns might be of tremendous help, most other equipment can really come in handy. Need extra medical? Try a Medical Kit. The OS equipment in particular can be incredibly useful. Share skills, create skills and classifications. Again, any personnel with a special download of equipment can be of particular use to bust through dilemmas. Special downloads suspend play, so if you need something you can get it then. And I never thought I would be recommending PADDs, but given Executive Authorization's VERY picky requirements it might be just worth including. And since PADDs boost cunning you may need fewer people to get through Ferengi Infestation's hefty cunning requirement.

I'm a Doctor, Not a Bricklayer: Heal that Horta. It's in pain, it needs your help...it can be REALLY hard to get rid of. Need an extra geology to get around Seismic Quake? Yet another use.

Thermal Deflectors: Protection against, Firestorm, Thought Fire, Plasma Fire, Fire Sculptor and Phaser Burns. Did I mention Firestorm??

Genetronic Replicators: keep two medical out of harms way and keep everybody else alive. Who doesn't like this card?

### **Other Dilemma Busting Strategies:**

Red shirting vs. Mega Teaming.

Today's metagaming environment has curtailed red-shirting significantly. There are extreme consequences: I Tried to Warn You, from the Q-Continuum, can erase the points of a mission already solved. Thine Own Self can decimate a small away team...and severely stop the Borg. Other risks, including hitting a well placed Alien Parasites or Conundrum, can turn what was a mere scouting expedition into mass death and destruction. The risks are great. Mega-teaming, on the other hand, seems to be the method of choice for coping with today's dilemma environment. The theory is simple: assemble a significantly sized group of people and simply throw them at anything that can get in your way. A large number of classifications and skills (often boosted by equipment) can often reduce any well thought out combination to a mere afterthought. Mega teaming is, however, not without its risks! Those nasty Denevan Neural Parasites punish an away team according to its size—the bigger the team, the more casualties mount. Large teams are also susceptible to other punishing consequences: The Higher...The Fewer. A Borg Ship or Cytherians. Or having that team stranded because of Chula: the Game or a Mission Debriefing. It seems, however, that since speed is king—getting large numbers of personnel into play quickly often win games—that mega teaming is still the way to go.

Without scans, or extremely honed extra sensory perception, it is often difficult to judge what might be under that next card...what casualties you might face. Yet is still critical to find out what is there, assemble what is needed to defeat it, and ultimately solve the mission. I often find that the best way to cope with dilemmas in today's environment...to boldly go where no away team has gone before is to take the middle ground. In my opinion, you will be more successful thinking of your deck construction as composed of two critical sets of personnel: your dilemma busters and your mission solvers. These people will often overlap...but the secret is focus and redundancy...and not being afraid to throw a **medium** number of personnel (3-5 in space or 4-7 on a planet) in an attempt to uncover what is there, bust those dilemmas, and then bring in the reinforcements for the mission solving. The consequence of this strategy: you must be prepared to lose people! And given that the speediest decks will have plenty of people, and hopefully those will be redundant, that is a small price to pay to overcome those dilemmas and solve missions.

An example of how this might work...in space, one of the most commonly used dilemma combos is Maglock followed by Cytherians. The idea is to trap a large number of officers on a ship heading down the spaceline. To counter this strategy, you can, of course, be prepared to use an STP and return a ship to your hand...or attempt the mission with a crew consisting of three redundant officers—while keeping your mission solvers on another ship. After the first crew falls victim to the trap, you can then use the second to clean out what is there and solve the mission.

Similarly on a planet...which is the more hostile scenario in today's metagame (especially considering you can use Q the Ref to suspend play and download a Temporal Vortex to combat the extremely powerful Borg ship dilemma) I might try and attempt a mission with a combination of people that I know can get through Ferengi Infestation followed by the Denevan Parasites. It will take 2 security and cunning greater than fifty...which is often an investment of 6 or so personnel...but consider using a couple of security androids, or a PADD, or other attribute enhancements. Even if the Parasites strike, if your mission solvers are safe on another ship, on a landed ship, or even at another location, you can then move in and solve the mission.

Granted, a good player will mix up his dilemma combos...but you can feel relatively secure using a team of six or seven busters rather than throwing in everything. And of course, you CAN always take the risk and throw a stray mission specialist, or Lt. Redshirt, or the Cardassian dilemma busting wonder Elim Garak (avoid all those random selection dilemmas!), just to see what is there. And there are other benefits you can find by testing the waters...consider exploring dilemmas with personnel that gain points when they are killed. For the Ferengi, considering using Vacuum Desiccated Remains.

The next section will look at the number of classification and skills that I try to use when constructing a deck, and some specific strategies for getting through dilemmas! Ultimately, however, it will come down to your playing style...if you deck is more "planet heavy"—that is, based primarily around solving planet missions, you can add more planet dilemma skills to your dilemma busting mix and decrease the emphasis on the space skills. On the other hand, if you are primarily concerned with solving space missions, the skill set can be slightly different, and you might want to add more "space" dilemma redundancy to your skill set. But be warned, the Big Picture can strike and a good deck SHOULD be diverse enough to be able to handle most situations. And your local metagame (and even scenario type) will help you determine what is most needed for your deck. I cannot emphasize this enough, however: focus your mission selection and build in personnel redundancy. You'll be far more successful!

### **Optimal Skill and Classification Ratios:**

Here is my mix when I'm building a deck...and this is purely based on what I consider necessary to get through the most commonly used dilemmas in the game as efficiently as possible. Also try to use personnel with multiple classifications. An officer who is also an engineer will go a lot farther than just a regular officer.

Classifications:

Officers: 5-6. This may seem high, however, officer is one of the hardest classifications to duplicate or create. No equipment can create it, and skill sharing is very limited.

Medical: 4-5. You'll need it.

Science: 5-6. Science deprivation is hot.

Engineer: 3. At this point in the game, your greatest needs for engineers are moving Garbage Scows and getting around a Quantum Singularity Lifeform. QSL is not applicable on planets.

Security: 6-7. Security seems to be the most valuable classification. I always like to use security that have leadership if at all possible (friendly fire), and I will reduce this number by one for every two guns that I am using. OS guns (those that add security) will reduce this number by a one to one ratio.

VIP: not necessary for dilemma busting.

Civilian: 1.

Miscellaneous notes:

1. You can also optimize this by using equipment. A science kit can make an officer a scientist. If you're using one, you might consider reducing your number of science personnel. Similarly, anybody who special downloads equipment that can serve this function gets a MUCH higher priority in my decks. They go a LOT farther toward meeting this classification ratio.
2. This will also depend significantly on affiliation...Ferengi, for example, have scores of civilians and VIPs that will see play.
3. My final consideration is in free reporting. If a personnel can report for free (whatever means) I'll use it more frequently than not.
4. Soong-Type Androids are your friend. Even two of them in your deck will reduce the number of classifications I'm using by three. Mainly because you can give them the classification that you need when you report them. More (especially with a cybernetics sub-theme) is even better!

Skill sets:

This is where it gets much more arbitrary. I'll break this into five sections, necessary, planet, and space, helpful, and NOT necessary...these are skills you'll want more or less of depending on the emphasis of your deck. Two more caveats. First, after these skill sets are other characteristics to keep in mind. This list does NOT guarantee that you will have everything you need to get through every dilemma in the game. And please keep in mind that these skills should in ADDITION to the skills contained on your primary mission solvers. I don't look at my mission solvers as my dilemma busters. Now if they can help, great! But I want to be as redundant as I can for the deck I'm working on.

*Necessary:*

Leadership: 3 or 4.  
Computer Skill: 2 or 3  
Diplomacy: 3  
Biology: 3  
Treachery: 3 (even more helpful if on a Federation personnel)

*Planet skills:*

Geology: 2 or 3 (consider I'm a Doctor, Not a Bricklayer)  
Exobiology: 3  
Anthropology: 2 (one preferably on a civilian)

*Space skills:*

Stellar Cartography: 2 or 3  
Astrophysics: 3  
Physics: 2  
Transporter skill: 2  
Navigation: 2 (preferably one person will have it at a x2 level)

*Helpful:*

Greed: 1 (on someone with cunning greater than 7 or on someone with treachery).  
Law: 1  
Empathy: 1  
Resistance: 1 (much tougher if not playing Bajoran!)  
Honor: 2 or 3 (this becomes NOT necessary if you have sufficient treachery in the deck)

*Not Necessary:*

Archaeology  
Smuggling  
Acquisition  
Music (be safe and have a ship with a LOT of shields)  
Youth  
Cybernetics  
Mindmeld  
The Intelligence Skills (Tal Shiar, Obsidian Order, etc—note that they can be helpful for dealing with Primitive Culture).

*Other Characteristics:* These are those strange combinations of things that don't really count as skills, per se, but do go a long way towards busting through dilemmas.

Suna: While neither a characteristic nor a dilemma requirement, Suna (and his download of Reflection Therapy) can go a VERY long way towards busting dilemmas and getting you out of a jam when you need it.

Staff stars: ever since Oops! appeared, keeping track of staff stars became relevant for dilemmas. I try to have at least a third of my personnel have staff stars. Consider having a

decent number of universal personnel in your deck as well; they often have staff stars, and can help combat Hide and Seek.

Executive Authorization: Generals, Kais, Founders, Legates, etc. This can be a very tough dilemma to get past. I try to build decks that use two of the characteristics. For OS heavy decks that can be very tough. PADDs!

In the Pale Moonlight: This dilemma has found an almost permanent place after Firestorm. Your best bet to deal with this is to make sure you have someone with low integrity that is NOT in the away team that deals with the firestorm. Federation personnel with treachery are becoming a much more common occurrence. And note: only the universal founder will survive without enhancements. Of the Garaks, AU Garak, Elim Garak, and Plain, Simple Garak will survive as well.

Founders. I like the Dominion. As a result, I like founders! They are good at busting dilemmas.

Chula: the Dice. Integrity >6, Cunning >7 and Strength >8 can be tricky at times for certain affiliations. Consider enhancements, and consider making sure you have some high-integrity personnel.

Integrity in general. This is a tricky subject. Some of the nastiest dilemmas (Q, Alien Parasites, Conundrum) all require it, in great numbers. Several affiliations (most notably the Romulans, Ferengi, Cardassians, Non-aligned, and the entire Mirror Quadrant!) do not have it in great numbers. You'll want to use higher numbers rather than lower numbers.

Chula: the Chandra. While I won't go out of my way to make sure EVERY personnel in my deck has a matching number...it CAN be very helpful to make sure you have a goodly number of people that do have a matching attribute. Even more helpful is making sure that you have a decent number of security personnel and leadership personnel with a matching attribute. Cunning of 7 is probably the most common attribute number in the game.

Q the Ref and Temporal Vortex: a very nice combination of cards that can help you against two of the most devastating dilemmas in the game: Borg Ship and The Sheliak. Consider them.

### **Conclusion:**

As is the case with any article or any player's article on an element of ST:CCG, there is a great deal of this that is highly subjective. These are rules of thumb that I tend to go by. I encourage you to experiment with your own theories, to try different combinations of dilemmas, and to find strategies that suit your style. But I hope that this article has given you a decent, perhaps new look on dilemma theory, dilemma busting, and dilemma



combinations that will make your game more valuable, more successful, and ultimately, more fun.

## **Concepts: Point Denial**

### **That Great Sucking Sound You Hear: Point Denial Strategies**

By Chris Heard

Whatever unexpected strategies your opponents employ, whatever gimmicks, tricks, or "cheese" they trot out for the next tournament, whatever "power cards" they have managed to acquire in obscene multiples (Guardian of Forever x8, say), there is still one fundamental rule of Star Trek CCG play: your opponent must have more points than you to win, and must reach 100 (or in some cases, 180) points to achieve a full win. Point denial can be a very effective tool against a wide variety of opponents, if deployed wisely.

#### I. Passive/Defensive Point Denial Strategies

Passive or defensive point denial strategies are very easy to implement, as they depend solely on your dilemma selection. You merely construct dilemmas that are calculated to sap points from your opponent's score, then go about your own business as normal.

##### A. The Higher ... the Fewer

An old favorite of many players from back in the Alternate Universe expansion, The Higher ... the Fewer remains an effective point-denial card in a wide variety of decks. The Higher ... the Fewer costs your opponent 1 point for every member of the crew or Away Team, period. The dilemma has no conditions, and no built-in method of avoiding the point loss. Against non-Borg opponents, this dilemma almost guarantees you a 1-point reduction in your opponent's score. That may not sound like much, but 1 point can be the difference between overcoming a Dead End and being stopped by it.

Moreover, you can use wall dilemmas to increase the probability that your The Higher ... the Fewer will have a larger number of targets. Be careful not to be too distracted by the several dilemmas that now require two (Chula: The Door), three (Chula: The Abyss), or even four (Chula: The Drink, Lineup) personnel to get past at all. These also "stop" or otherwise thin out the number of personnel encountering them, so they are not necessarily the best setups for The Higher ... the Fewer. Instead, consider dilemmas with high attribute and skill multiple requirements, like Ferengi Infestation, New Essentialists, Clan People, and so on. Think also of dilemmas that require a certain number of personnel to get past, but don't stop that group selectively like the Chula dilemmas and Lineup. Good choices include as Maglock (-3 points for the three OFFICERS), Oops! (-3 points for the

three staff stars), and Primitive Culture (-6 points if overcome by six Klingons, for example).

By the way, The Higher ... the Fewer calculates its point penalty based on the number of *personnel* in the crew or Away Team, not the number of *personnel cards* in the crew or Away Team, so watch out for those pesky dual-personnel and sap all the points you can.

## B. Conditional Point Denial Dilemmas

Other dilemmas are perhaps not quite as "sure-fire" as The Higher ... the Fewer, but nevertheless provide excellent point denial mechanisms.

### 1. The Sheliak

The Sheliak + Chula: The Chandra + Q remains a popular dilemma combination for many players. If it reaches the destination planet before your opponent can complete the mission, The Sheliak will reduce that mission's point value to zero. The Sheliak is fairly easy to stave off, though, with a well-timed Temporal Vortex, so it is not necessarily the most reliable form of point denial available. (Of course, your own Revolving Door can shortly close that pesky Temporal Vortex. You could even play it on one of your own doorways on an earlier turn, then Wrong Door it onto the Revolving Door before the end of your opponent's turn.)

### 2. Hazardous Duty

Hazardous Duty functions both as a wall--since it requires 2 OFFICER to get past--and as a point denial mechanism, since it costs your opponent 5 points if any of their non-OFFICERS subsequently die at that location. Obviously, for maximum effect, you would want to follow up Hazardous Duty with a powerful killer dilemma. In space, Hazardous Duty + Borg Ship has been a popular combination, and on a planet Hazardous Duty + The Sheliak + Q can be extremely effective. However, Temporal Vortex (downloadable by discarding Q the Referee) makes Borg Ship and The Sheliak dilemmas a bit less reliable. Following Hazardous Duty with a wall dilemma that requires multiples of a non-OFFICER classification (especially SECURITY, since the only equipment card that adds SECURITY to OFFICERS is the Classic Type II Phaser, and works only for Federation [OS] personnel) and then Kelvan Show of Force can be a particularly potent combination. The wall dilemma greatly decreases your opponent's chances of sliding through your dilemma set without any non-OFFICERS present, and then Kelvan Show of Force selects two of the non-OFFICERS, one of whom dies and thereby triggers Hazardous Duty.

### 3. Punishment Zone

Punishment Zone is rather less reliable than Hazardous Duty, but has its own advantages. It forces your opponent to choose between losing a personnel and losing 5 points (10 if playing Federation). Many players will choose to lose the personnel, but if that personnel

is essential to their strategy (which, frankly, no one personnel in a deck should be), they might choose the point loss instead. Either way, you deny your opponent *something*.

#### 4. Lack of Preparation

Treated here mainly for the sake of completeness, Lack of Preparation was introduced in the First Contact expansion as an anti-redshirting dilemma. The personnel encountering Lack of Preparation can't get past the dilemma unless their crew or Away Team could have met the mission requirements at the beginning of the attempt. The dilemma is so easy to overcome that many players simply won't attempt a mission without a crew or Away Team that can solve it. Thus, its utility in a point denial strategy might be limited. On the other hand, if you know that players in your tournament scene are reckless redshirts, you might want to use Lack of Preparation.

#### 5. Edo Probe

"State the purpose!" The purpose of Edo Probe is to send your opponent's crew or Away Team scurrying off to work on another mission instead of the one where they encountered the Edo Probe, or to punish them with a 10-point loss if they gamble and lose. The key to effective use of Edo Probe is following it up with excellent stopper dilemmas. One popular combination is Edo Probe + Hate Crime + Lethean Telepathic Attack. Your opponent will either need to have two (or more) Betazoids (unlikely unless playing Federation or Ferengi), two (or more) Letheans (possible for any affiliation, but rarely seen in actual play), or three empaths of different species (so that two will still be functional after the Hate Crime resolves) in the crew or Away Team in order to get past this dilemma set without being "stopped" and losing 10 points to Edo Probe. Chula: The Game and Primitive Culture are other dilemmas that typically have high rates of success as follow-ups to Edo Probe.

#### C. Royale Casino "Side Games"

The casino in the surreal Hotel Royale has provided several dilemmas whose "side games" offer point denial possibilities. The question is, should you play blackjack or slots (craps is out of the question if you are going for point denial, since it cannot cause your opponent to lose points)? Either game is, frankly, unpredictable. Holding exactly 21 CUNNING in your hand, without going over, is tricky at best, and if your opponent gets closer, you will lose the 5 points to Royale Casino: Blackjack. As for Royale Casino: Slots, there are a reasonably good number of personnel with two matching attribute numbers--and several with three matching numbers--so you run considerable risk of actually giving your opponent 5 points by seeding Slots against them.

Self-seeding Slots somewhere might be a different story; you can easily download Mr. Quark to your hand using Quark's Isolinear Rods, or Par Lenor or Krax using the 1st Rule of Acquisition, to score 5 points from your self-seeded Slots. Be aware, however, that winning a game of Slots does *not* take points away from your opponent. Only the player whose crew or Away Team actually encounters Royale Casino: Slots can gain or lose

points from it. A self-seeded Slots thus contributes nothing to a point denial strategy as such.

#### D. The Q-Continuum

Q-Continuum side decks are by no means ubiquitous, but using one expands the range of point denial strategies available to you. Perhaps the most obvious is Mandarin Bailiff. Your opponent must choose between giving you the selected personnel as a captive or "paying" you X points, where X = the number of skill dots on the personnel card. Mandarin Bailiff can thus cost your opponent either one personnel or 1-8 points (and net those points for you), depending on the opponent's choice.

His Honor, the High Sheriff of Nottingham provides another point denial mechanism tied to capturing. If you hold any of your opponent's personnel captive when their crew or Away Team encounters His Honor, they must choose whether to lose 5 points or regain a captive. While this seems like a ridiculously easy choice--of course they'll ask for the captive back rather than losing points--if you then show SECURITY from your hand, you capture *two* personnel present (random selection). If you conspicuously download Odo to your hand using Quark's Isolinear Rods early in the game, *but don't play him*, an observant opponent will know that you have SECURITY in your hand. At that point, the opponent must weigh their options very carefully. What can they stand to lose more: 5 points or two personnel?

Another fantastic point denial mechanism in the Q Continuum is I Tried to Warn You, although it only works if your opponent commits the unpardonable offense of being a grievously savage race--rather, of redshirting a mission with only one non-Borg personnel or using all space or all planet missions. If your opponent did either of those things, you may place I Tried to Warn You on any mission; that mission becomes unattemptable and unscoutable, and any points previously gained from solving that mission are lost. Of course, point loss from I Tried to Warn You is very easy to avoid, simply by following the simple rule: "If your opponent seeds a Q-Continuum side deck or Beware of Q, never attempt a mission with fewer than two personnel." Thus, I Tried to Warn You is normally effective only against incorrigible redshirts. Speaking of Beware of Q, note that Mandarin Bailiff, His Honor, and I Tried to Warn You are all Q dilemmas directly seedable with Beware of Q.

#### II. Active/Offensive Point Denial Strategies

The various point denial dilemmas are easy to use, but they largely depend on your opponent for their success. You need not eschew them, but if you want point denial to be more than a mere "sweetener" to your dilemma strategy, you'll need a more aggressive approach.

##### A. 62nd Rule of Acquisition

One of the few Rules of Acquisition events that doesn't require a Greed or Acquisition personnel to use, the 62nd Rule of Acquisition is a great general-purpose point denial tool. If you play it on a mission before it is attempted, if your crews or Away Teams attempting that mission never contain less than three or more than seven personnel, and if you do not play Scan or Full Planet Scan (there or anywhere), the 62nd Rule gives you 10 bonus points *and subtracts 10 points from your opponent's score* when you complete the mission. Just make sure you have plenty of skill redundancy, and always attempt with a crew or Away Team that can pass Lack of Preparation (it would be a shame to lose those 10 extra points). Note that since the 62nd Rule awards bonus points rather than affecting mission point values, it can be played Q's Planet (Destroy Radioactive Garbage Scow and Hero of the Empire can't affect the undefined point value of Q's Planet).

### B. Destroy Radioactive Garbage Scow

Destroy Radioactive Garbage Scow has been lurking around since the Alternate Universe expansion, and was given new life with the introduction of the Female's Love Interest & Garbage Scow dual dilemma in Enhanced Premiere. The interrupt, Destroy Radioactive Garbage Scow, plays to discard a Radioactive Garbage Scow dilemma (including the one built into Female's Love Interest & Garbage Scow) and reduce by 10 the point value of the mission at which the scow is located.

Prior to Enhanced Premiere, players could only expect to use Destroy Radioactive Garbage Scow consistently once or twice per game since Radioactive Garbage Scow seeds only at space missions. Because Female's Love Interest & Garbage Scow can seed at either space or planet missions, however, Destroy Radioactive Scow is now a viable strategy for sapping quite a number of points from your opponent. The setup is simple: just seed Female's Love Interest & Garbage Scow at as many of your opponent's missions as you like. Then, when your opponent encounters the Garbage Scow part of the dilemma, play Destroy Radioactive Garbage Scow (it targets the dilemma specifically, so it can play during the mission attempt) to cost your opponent 10 points. (If you're not content to wait for your opponent to attempt the missions, seed the scows under your own missions, attempt with all-male crews or Away Teams, and use your ship to tow the scow to an opponent's mission before blowing it up with the interrupt.)

### C. Hero of the Empire

Admittedly, if you want to use Hero of the Empire effectively, you're going to have to use tribbles. What's more, Hero of the Empire requires some setup, and a fair investment in seed cards (especially if you're going to trigger it early in the game). Nevertheless, it provides a powerful point denial tool. In brief, Hero of the Empire reduces your opponent's alpha quadrant mission values by 10 points each, and increases the value of your missions with a Klingon icon by 10 points each if solved by your non-Federation crew or Away Team.

A Hero of the Empire engine has several components. First, Hero of the Empire plays on Deep Space Station K-7, so you will need to seed or play K-7. Since K-7 only plays at

Sherman's Peak, you'll need to seed or play that time location; in order to get that time location into play, you'll need to seed Agricultural Assessment. Fortunately, when you seed or play Sherman's Peak, its game text allows you to download Deep Space Station K-7. In order to activate Hero of the Empire through your own actions--and you certainly shouldn't expect your opponent to do it for you--you'll need a Tribble Bomb, which in turn requires you to use a tribbles side deck (seeding a Storage Compartment Door) and Barry Waddle. You also need a mechanism for getting Barry to K-7; Temporal Vortex may be the most reliable.

The entire sequence would go something like this: Seed Agricultural Assessment. Seed Sherman's Peak, downloading Deep Space Station K-7 there. Seed Hero of the Empire, downloading Captain Kirk to Deep Space Station K-7. During the game, create a tribble group on Deep Space Station K-7. Get Barry Waddle into play and back to K-7, where he special downloads the Tribble Bomb. Three turns later, Captain Kirk is killed by the Tribble Bomb, and the timeline disruption reduces your opponent's mission points.

Note that the point manipulation provided by Hero of the Empire is "retroactive." It doesn't matter when in the game you actually complete the Hero of the Empire objective. Since the point manipulation is based on timeline disruption, it even affects missions already completed.

### III. Defending Yourself against Point Denial

Suppose you anticipate that your nemesis will bring her Ferengi "Hero of the 62nd Rule in DRAGS" deck to the next tournament. How might you best prepare?

#### 1. Respond in Kind

One of the best responses to point denial is to fight fire with fire. Use your own point-denial substratum to level the playing field with your point-denying opponent. If you're unwilling to commit the resources to a tit-for-tat response, however, there are some other things you can do.

#### 2. Overcome Point-Related Dilemmas

The Q-Continuum dilemmas that contribute to point loss are pretty easy to sidestep, as is Lack of Preparation, if you always attempt missions with a crew or Away Team of two or more personnel who meet the mission requirements at the start of the attempt. Of course, you're going to need some pretty serious skill redundancy in your deck in order to cope with whatever dilemmas get thrown at you.

Hazardous Duty with a guaranteed killer behind it is harder to overcome. Only by making sure that all of your personnel are OFFICERS can you definitively avoid a Hazardous Duty point loss, and that can be hard to do. The Higher ... the Fewer is similarly almost impregnable (though see below). As for Edo Probe, if you hold in reserve a second mission-solving team, within RANGE of the relevant mission, you might be able to go on

through the probe, sacrifice the first attempting team to whatever is there, and then sweep in with the second mission-solving team and still succeed on that turn (it doesn't have to be the crew or Away Team that encountered the probe that completes the mission).

### 3. Use Counter Cards

The 62nd Rule of Acquisition can, of course, be nullified by Kevin Uxbridge. Your timing is important here, however. You must nullify the Rule before your opponent completes the mission. Once the mission is completed, the 62nd Rule is discarded, and can no longer be nullified. Similarly, Destroy Radioactive Garbage Scow can be nullified by Amanda Rogers. Of course, your opponent could respond to either Kevin or Amanda with Oof!, thus causing a point loss, albeit half the previously threatened points.

With the exception of strategies that actually modify the mission's point value--Hero of the Empire and Destroy Radioactive Garbage Scow--there is another way to avoid point loss altogether, at least where it matters most. If you are desperate enough to avoid point denial at all costs, simply self-seed an Altonian Brain Teaser at every mission. It doesn't much matter where it comes in the stack. Bonus points scored there--including *negative* bonus points--won't count toward winning (unless you forgot it was there and send Julian Bashir in with a couple of Federation PADDs).

Another possible, though costly, point denial counter is Bribery. You can discard a Gold-Pressed Latinum present at a particular mission along with the Bribery incident to buy your way out of a single point loss of up to 9 points. This is useful against The Higher ... the Fewer, Punishment Zone, and other such point losses. However, the price is steep (discarding two cards), and cannot protect you from those nasty -10 point losses from the 62nd Rule of Acquisition, Destroy Radioactive Garbage Scow, Lack of Preparation, Edo Probe, and so on.

### 4. Generate Bonus Points

You might choose to find a way of generating bonus points for yourself to offset potential losses. There are all sorts of ways of doing this: Dabo, Particle Fountain, Drought Tree, the Phoenix, Colony, and so on. Simply include whatever bonus point generating mechanism fits best into your deck. Be careful, however, not to make yourself susceptible to the Writ of Accountability by generating too many bonus points off of dilemmas.

### 5. Defuse the Tribble Bomb

The only way to prevent point losses from Hero of the Empire is to defuse the Tribble Bomb before it kills Captain Kirk. The Tribble Bomb card itself specifies the mechanism for "examining" tribbles to find the Bomb. If your opponent is in a big hurry to get the Bomb started, they will have only a few tribbles on K-7, making it more likely that you will find the Bomb through your examination. The tough part is getting a personnel there with a tricorder that early. Several personnel can download tricorders, but none of those are native to the Sherman's Peak timeline. If Hero of the Empire is popular in your area, it

might be worthwhile to seed Crossover and stock Chief Surgeon McCoy, First Officer Spock, or Marlina Moreau in your Q's Tent side deck so that you can quickly start examining the tribbles, one by one by one ...

## 6. If All Else Fails

Finally, there *is* one absolutely, sure-fire, guaranteed-or-your-money-back way of rendering your opponent's entire point denial strategy completely irrelevant:

Play Borg.

## Concepts: Q-Flash

### A Q-Flash of Inspiration

By Steve Boyles

The Q-Continuum side deck, or “Flash” as it’s commonly known, has been rediscovered by expert players within the last year. For several years after its inception in 1996, the Flash was shunned by most players as an ineffective use of a seed slot. After all, you have to seed at least one Q-Flash doorway to open the side deck, and seed a couple more as dilemmas. And heaven forbid your opponent slaps a Revolving Door on your Q-Flash, effectively nullifying all the Q-Flashes seeded as dilemmas until you can get it open again. Never mind that many of the Q-Continuum cards have more powerful counterparts in regular dilemmas. Why risk your Penalty Box being Kevin Uxbridge-ed when a good ol’ Armus or even a much more targetable Yuta works just as well?

And for quite some time, this logic held. However, over time, the Flash was gradually strengthened. A foretaste of this trend was seen in the Official Tournament Sealed Deck, when Hide and Seek, arguably one of the most powerful and versatile Q-Cards even today, was released. Its flexibility was amazing: it could restrict Q-Bypass, one of the most prevalent strategies when it was released. And if the opponent wasn’t planning on Q-Bypassing, it could usually filter a number of personnel out of the mission attempt.

The Deep Space Nine expansion probably provided the biggest benefit to the Flash. Several factors contributed to this — for one, the inception of many powerful Q-Cards, such as Fightin’ Words, Rhetorical Question, or I Tried to Warn You, for instance. Secondly, Beware of Q, perhaps one of the most powerful cards from the set, gave Flash fans flexibility that had never been seen before. You didn’t even have to seed Flashes any more: you could stock them in your Q’s Tent or draw deck, and whenever your opponent encountered a dilemma, you could replace it for a Q-Flash (once per mission). You didn’t have to guess where your opponent would attempt missions... instead, you could get a Flash into your hand and essentially “seed” it anywhere your opponent tried to solve a mission. Furthermore, you could opt to seed Q-Dilemmas as regular space/planet dilemmas. Although this probably reduced the Flash’s popularity immediately (after all, why bother seeding Flashes if all you need are the more powerful dilemmas), a definite



effect was that the power of many of these Q-Dilemmas, such as Mandarin Bailiff and Fightin' Words, was brought into the spotlight.

But still many players neglected their Flashes, and only a few truly realized its power. The next big boost came not through the release of any particular card, but rather through a change in the metagame. Q-Bypass was still quite popular (although nowhere near the fever pitch reached right after First Contact released), and for the first time players as a whole were discovering the power of Scanning. The Q-Flash put a big thorn in the side of both strategies: Q-Flashes aren't discarded by Q dilemmas — they're doorways, not dilemmas — and a Scan won't tell you what's coming in a Q-Flash, either seeded or replaced by Beware of Q. But the real kicker in the rise of the Flash? Part of the rules introduced in Blaze of Glory included the recycling of side decks: when the side deck was exhausted, shuffle the discarded cards and start over again, allowing players to build small, tight flashes that would ensure an opponent would hit them all with minimal duplication and no fear of running out of Q-Cards.

And now, the benefits of the Flash are hard to deny. Although individual Q-Cards may have limited power, remember that for the cost of one seed card (the Flash) plus a few extras that are distributed over all Flashes encountered (Beware of Q, if it's being used, or the Flash needed to open the Q-Continuum) you reap tremendous benefits. After all, for that one slot you can get a guaranteed random "kill" (Penalty Box), a selective removal of any personnel (Q-Type Android), either score points, make your opponent lose points, or grab somebody else (Mandarin Bailiff), stop a good number of personnel (Hide and Seek), make many personnel lose a number of vital skills (Fightin' Words), and slow down speed decks by raising the winning score to 140 (Q's Planet). If any regular dilemma had all these effects, it'd be labeled broken and unbalanced. However, this is the basic effect of a properly constructed Q-Flash. It's hard to get a better deal than that!

So, for the rest of this section I'll be discussing the various ways of using the Q-Flash, and the most effective technique for each plan.

First, and perhaps simplest, is a player planning on performing only one Flash swap by seeding Beware of Q and placing a Q-Flash in the Tent. Sure, if the opportunity arises, he could plan on Palor-ing it back and re-using it, but the intent is only to use it once. Some may ask what the point of doing this is... after all, you need a seed slot for the Beware of Q, which might as well be a Q-Flash, saving the Tent slot. And I'll grant that this is a good point. However, there are still plenty of advantages to doing it this way. One is that you can guarantee your opponent will hit your Flash. He attempts a mission, and there appears Q. No guesswork involved. Also, this is definitely the advantageous method if you're running low on dilemmas (e.g., twelve in a very fast deck) and want the few dilemmas you have to pack some extra punch. Simply seeding the Q-Flash regularly won't necessarily accomplish this, for the reasons given above.

So, if you're doing this, how should you build your Flash? In this case, there are two very simple rules:

- Keep it small. If your opponent is only going to go through your Flash once, perhaps twice, you want to make sure that all the power cards (Fightin' Words, Hide and Seek, etc.) are hit. You can't afford to water it down with less powerful cards (Lemon-Aid, The Issue is Patriotism, etc.) if there's a risk that the extra Guilty - Provisionally prevented your opponent from hitting the Q-Type Android.
- Only one of each card. This may seem obvious, but it's worth repeating. Any duplicates will be discarded as misseeds. If your opponent's only likely to face one Flash, there's really no point in including multiples.

Also, if using this technique, you need to be absolutely sure you're swapping out the right dilemma at the right time. My advice? In general, restrict your swapping to wall dilemmas. In this case there is literally no loss. Don't swap until your opponent brings in the requirements for the wall. After all, if your opponent has the requirements, he could pass the dilemma anyway, so why not add some extra hassling from a Flash? And better yet, the best walls to use for Flash swapping require a lot of personnel to pass them (Ferengi Infestation, for instance, as opposed to In the Pale Moonlight, which can be passed by one personnel), ensuring that your opponent will have to face several Q-cards instead of redshirting through it.

OK, so that's the first technique. What's the second? The second way is to aim to use your Flash multiple times during a game, whether by planning for multiple Flash swaps by stocking some in your deck, or seeding several Q-Flashes as dilemmas, or a combination of swapping and seeding.

Not too surprisingly, the same general rules apply. Ever since your Flash recycled when it was emptied, there was little reason for stocking multiples of most Q-Cards. The only two exceptions I can think of are for Penalty Box and Q-Type Android. For Penalty Box, two will suffice (even if one is Kevined, it will be replaced below the side deck to be encountered again). Same with Q-type Android. One to place on a personnel in case of an android deck, another to seed personnel under Q's Planet. And again, it's important to keep the Flash small. Make sure your opponent hits the key cards under each Flash! The only way to do this is to either stock lots of copies of important cards or to keep the Flash small. Keep it small. Really. Stocking multiples risks drawing duplicates within the Flash, wasting precious cards. Combine a small flash with certain key cards, and your opponent will be hurting.

The two methods described above will be optimum for a basic, typical deck that uses its Flash to strengthen its dilemmas, by far the most common method. A typical Flash might look something like this:

Penalty Box x2  
 Mandarin Bailiff  
 Hide and Seek  
 Fightin' Words

Obviously, it's customizable. I'd advise against Q-Type Androids for removing personnel if you're playing a speed deck, because it requires Q's Planet to be in play, which will negate much of your speed. Another suggestion is to avoid using both Q-Type Android and Hide and Seek in the same Flash. If they come up in the wrong order, you may lose a lot of your potential QTA targets to the Hide and Seek. Think about the cards in your Flash: will any of them hinder any of the others? Hide and Seek won't really hurt random removers (e.g., Penalty Box) because you wouldn't have had a choice anyway.

The third way to use your Flash is for a more specialized purpose. Under this falls attempts at cheesing with the Flash (such as Are These Truly Your Friends, Brother/Gift of the Tormentor, or, more seriously, The Issue Is Patriotism/Defend Homeworld) or using the Flash as a magic bullet (filling it with I Tried to Warn You or Q-Type Androids, for instance).

These Flashes have entirely different building rules. For example, if your dilemmas can be easily redshirted through, fill a flash with mostly I Tried to Warn You. If your opponent redshirts, use a Beware of Q swap to make him pay. In this case, it's OK to violate the general rule about avoiding duplicates, because you have a specific intent in mind.

If you're trying to use your Flash for a combo, devote as much room as you can to protecting the combo while still making sure the right Flash cards come up. For instance, in The Issue Is Patriotism/Defend Homeworld, one risk to the strategy is your opponent nullifying The Issue Is Patriotism. Against Amanda Rogers you can stock lots of Q2s in the draw deck, and against Guinan you could add a couple Where's Guinan? to the Q-Flash. If you're swapping with Ferengi Infestation, which requires at least four personnel to pass, make the Flash something like three Where's Guinans and one The Issue. The opponent is still guaranteed to hit the Issue, while there's a three in four chance a Where's Guinan will show up before The Issue.

One caveat about using a Flash for magic bullets: Into the Breach is not a recommendation of mine. While a few battle decks may attempt missions early for purposes of Council of Warriors, the vast majority (and almost all top-level battle decks) do much of their battle before attempting missions. So, the odds are quite low that Into the Breach will be on the table when the battling begins.

So, what is my recommendation with the Flash? Simple: use it! It's one of the most powerful resources available to a skilled player, and it's still underused. The best players have discovered its potential, but most average players have not. It took me a while to start using the Flash, but once I did I was hooked. "Come on, try it... all the cool people are doing it... try it, just this once..."

-Steve Boyles

## Concepts: Tournament Tactics

### Tournament Tactics

By Ian Taylor

To be fair, unless you are really worried about your world ranking, most tournaments you will enter will be social events, a chance to have a good time of a weekend or at most a way to try out new ideas for a major tournament coming up. However, there will in time be tournaments you really want to win or do well in, be it a Grand Slam, National, Worlds Qualifier, Continental or the World Championship itself. For these tournaments your approach will be totally different; for one, you hope that your deck will be better. However, making your deck better is adequately explained elsewhere in this guide. This section covers the other things you can do to improve your chances in big tournaments.

#### Preparation

As all potentially good players eventually discover, big tournaments start many weeks or even months in advance. I remember for the 1997 regional, Rik Thomas and myself built our decks 20 minutes before the tournament started and finished first and second. However in those days, you only had 60 cards in your deck, there was no downloading, the only side deck was the Q's Tent and yes, the standard of play was much lower. Trying to pull a stunt like that in today's environment is suicide. For a major tournament I would suggest you begin preparing a minimum of 2 weeks in advance.

However that's not to say that you must build your deck a fortnight before the tournament. Much of the preparation is done in your head at this stage. The first and possibly most important step is your attitude. Get it into your head that you are going to win the tournament. Don't enter the tournament trying to finish in the top half or top five or anything like that; enter the tournament thinking that you can win. Although you may not have all the cards or 22 Devidian Doors like some of the top players, with a little thought you can create a deck that can beat other top decks. The first tournament I won was with a deck with 3 rares in it based on scoring points from Royale Casino games with Mickey D. You may have to take risks but this can pay off. For example, play a Rogue Borg deck and hope none of the top players are using the appropriate counters.

Once you have got it into your head that you are going to win the tournament or if you are already a renowned player who is expected to do well, you will need to design and build your deck. There are a number of factors that you need to take into account for tournaments that you need not consider normally. Firstly, don't rely on any major surprises to win. Although sporting players will not attempt to scout your deck, there is always the chance that people will get the gist of what you're doing from other sources. Overheard words coming from your table, ill thought out comments from one of your past opponents or even the score in your games can give clues. For example, if you score a timed win 23-0 there is a good chance you might be playing with Dabo. Of course there is always a chance you will make the final confrontation and play someone who has legitimately seen your deck as well. There is a difference of opinion as to whether you

should play a tried and tested deck or something new that people might not expect. I tend to favour the latter although many top players favour the former and in the end it comes down to what kind of player you are. If you are not happy about playing a completely new deck in a major tournament then don't do it. Also one important factor that many good players (especially Europeans, funnily enough) forget is watch your speed. It is pointless having a deck that wins every game but always takes at least 70 minutes to do it. Under the present rules, timed wins are simply not much use if you want to win tournaments.

So hopefully, a few days before the tournament you have your deck, or at least a working version of it, built. However, there is still work to be done. First of all consider who the major opponents will be and what decks they are likely to play. Work out how your deck will work against these decks and consider any modifications you could make to make it better against these decks without damaging your efficiency too much. If you don't know whom you are likely to be playing (at the world championship for example), consider what decks you have heard about or seen on the Internet. Once you have what you think is the final version of your deck, carry out a few random draws. In other words, shuffle your draw deck, take 7 cards and play out the first few turns. This can iron out many inefficiencies and show what cards you might need more or less of in the deck. Oh yes, and one last point. In some tournament scenes there is a lot of bravado attached to going out drinking and staying up late the night before a tournament. The simple rule is this: if you are the kind of person who will suffer the next day, don't do it. If you need sleep, get some!

### **Playing the tournament**

In theory, this is the part of the tournament you least have to worry about. If you have built your deck properly and done your homework you should be able to sit back and watch the points roll in. Certainly at times, some games will go according to plan and your deck will work exactly as it is supposed to but less often than you will think when up against quality opposition. To give you some idea, at DecipherCon 2000 in day 2 of the worlds, I had a straightforward mission solver, but only 2 games out of 8 went to plan. However in 5 out of the other 6 I was able to adapt to the situation to get either a timed win or a full win meaning that I finished on 12 points and easily qualified for the final. Although by building a sound deck you have done most of the hard work, it is the ability to actually play the game that separates the good players from the great players.

However, it is widely agreed that playing the game well is largely intuitive. It is difficult to teach someone and comes either naturally or through a lot of experience. In fact, what defines a good player is becoming very confused between the great deck builders such as Jason Drake, Daniel Bell and Ian Vincent and the great players such as Todd Soper and Ken Tufts. There are, however, some simple things that all players can do to improve their results. Firstly as previously stated, you must be prepared to adapt your tactics. Always look at the big picture and not what your deck was designed to do. For example, in the worlds this year I stole 2 missions, one of which got me a full win when I would

have gotten a timed win and the other got me a timed win when I would have lost. Proactive wormholes can be turned into reactive wormholes in an emergency and 'pinged' Rogue Borg can be turned into mass Rogue Borg if an intruder force field appears. The best example of this I ever saw was James Farmer who went halfway across the space line to pick up his opponent's 10 Tribbles so his Klingons could get past 'In the Pale Moonlight'. In the same way as you should make the best use of what you've got in your hand, you should also make use of what you haven't got. If your opponent looks like he could win in the next couple of turns, your odds are much better if you attempt missions with what you've got on the table rather than wait in the hope you draw that vital personnel/Senior Staff meeting/Genetronic Replicator.

Remember though, that at the same time you are trying to execute your own game plan as best you can, you should also be watching your opponent. Too many otherwise good players tend to treat their opponent's turn as a time when they decide what to do in their next turn. There are 2 good reasons to keep an eye on your opponent.

- 1) You might get clues as to what their overall strategy is, prompting you to find a way to stop it. For example, if they have self seeds under their own missions and in their first turn they Defend Homeworld for Anya and Salia and download Leeta and Kukalaka to Quarks Bar, it's a fair bet they are Q-bypassing and you might be advised to try to trip their Qs quickly.
- 2) You might spot misplays. Unintentional misplays are very common even at the top level in today's environment. However, you need to spot them at the time they are made if you want them taken back.

Always remember that if your opponent does anything important like plays a key event/interrupt, attempts a mission or flies to a new location, always ask him/her to stop while you consider your options. Don't take too long over this but quickly look at your hand for possible counters. Occasionally there is a counter you didn't realise you had in your hand or a second function of a card that you didn't notice (e.g. 'AU Door' can nullify 'Revolving Door').

## **Tournament Psychology and Ethics**

This is really 2 topics which will be dealt with together here because the distinction between intentionally 'psyching out' an opponent and unsportsmanlike conduct is often blurred. However, although ignored by many players it is nevertheless becoming increasingly significant in big tournaments. For example, in the 2000 world championships, players with few dilemmas would put their hidden agendas on the table in front of missions as if they were dilemmas and then pass when they seemingly had many dilemmas left to seed. Although nobody considered this unsporting, a new player might be very confused. This type of play was ruled on for the first time during the same tournament when it was decided that sites must be put separate from the rest of your seed

deck so that they could not be used to pretend you have more seed cards left than you actually do.

My view on this is that it is up to the individual player whether they wish to indulge in such tactics or not. I believe that it is all part of the game and that it is no more unsporting than, for example, playing Q-bypass against an unsuspecting newcomer. On the other hand I might only be defending tactics that I myself have used more than most for years. Anyway, it's up to you to decide what you consider acceptable. If you decide that you are prepared to use such tactics in a major tournament, you will need to know how to do this effectively. In the case of very big tournaments, this can start many weeks before the tournament during discussions in person or on bulletin boards and email groups. If you know what you are playing, it is easy to manipulate others to change their decks accordingly. By saying how powerful you think Q-bypass is you may influence people to unnecessarily water down their decks with 'Hide and Seek' and 'Writ of Accountability'. On the other hand deliberately giving a poor opinion of a deck that you intend to play may encourage people to leave out counters or be unprepared. In the build up to the world championships we made a point of saying that we thought Cargo Running was no longer viable now that 'Temporal Vortex' can be downloaded when we knew a perfectly viable cargo running deck that did not contain distortions.

During the tournament itself, psychology is made easier by the fact that pressure and nerves may affect your opponent to the extent they believe your bluffs. If you are less nervous than your opponent then you have a distinct advantage. Much of the bluffing is done in the seed phase. The simple dilemma bluff described above can be taken to a new level if (once out of dilemmas) you pick up one of your hidden agendas or outposts and go to put it under a mission. Then stop, look at it again, put a strained look on your face and then very nervously say 'pass'. This will often provoke your opponent into an ill thought out pass. Once the game has started, a similar tactic can be used whereby when your opponent plays a non game winning event or interrupt (like 'Kivas' or 'Palor Toff'). Stop them, pick a card out of your hand and then say 'Oh go on, I'll let you have that one' when in fact you have no counters in your deck. Taking this one stage further (and this personally is a stage I would not go to) is telling a boldfaced lie about your deck. If you hit a 'Scientific Method' with only 2 science and say 'darn, I think they are the only 2 science in my deck', your opponent may be lulled into a false sense of security and take their time before attempting missions. What I do feel is a perfectly acceptable variation of this is to pretend you still have a chance when you know full well you don't in the hope of panicking your opponent into wasting time and not getting to 100 points. I remember in one tournament, my opponent shut down my Federation PNZ deck early. I then spent the rest of the game moving people around various ships, flying them towards his facilities and then retreating again. He spent so long chasing my ships around the spaceline that he eventually had to settle for a timed win.

Of course, the other side of the coin is how do you deal with your opponent's efforts at misleading you. There are 2 simple rules to follow here.

- 1) Try to be relaxed in a tournament and never let your opponent's reputation or fame

scare you. In fact claiming you have never heard of a really famous player is one way to really annoy them and possibly cause them to make mistakes.

- 2) Never take what you are told at face value. This is especially true if your opponent has told you something that it is in your interest to know. Ask yourself 'why has he told me this?' If you were buying a second hand car, you would not take the word of the car salesman so why should this change in a high stakes game?

Of course, tournament ethics themselves deserve some scrutiny. One of the most difficult questions to answer is what to do if you suspect your opponent is cheating. Although the obvious answer is to call the tournament director this is very difficult when it is something that is difficult to prove and especially difficult in the all too common case of stalling when calling the TD will waste yet more time. In most situations of cheating or gamesmanship it is far better to make it clear to your opponent that you know what they are doing. This will normally make them stop. In the case of stalling, first ask your opponent if he would mind playing a bit faster, then warn him that you think he is stalling, and only then if they still stall, call the TD over. I will not go any further into this subject because although it has happened in the past, cheating is very uncommon even in important tournaments. In fact far more common are acts of unprompted sportsmanship. For example, during the 1998 World Championships, Evan Lorenz (at the time player, not staff) allowed his opponent to seed his Nor sites even though he had forgotten in the facility phase. Whether you would allow your opponent to do something like this is up to you but bear in mind that the good players who are also nice guys such as Evan and Brad DeFruiter are normally far more well known and liked than the top 'do or die' players.

If there is one tip I can leave you that should override all others it is that you should always have fun. After all, it's only a game.

## **Concepts: Understanding Personae**

### **Me, Myself, and I: Understanding Personae**

By Chris Heard

Stardate 41153.7: Starfleet proudly launches the fifth *U.S.S. Enterprise*, under the command of war hero Jean-Luc Picard.

Stardate 43989.1: The Borg advance on Earth, confronting Starfleet's finest at Wolf 359. Starfleet captains are both saddened and outraged by the fact that their enemy is guided by a Borg calling himself "Locutus," who before his assimilation had been the captain of the *U.S.S. Enterprise*, Jean-Luc Picard.

Stardate 47135.2: Believing that Jean-Luc Picard has been killed in a bar fight, the *U.S.S. Enterprise* pursues a mercenary vessel linked to the incident. To their surprise, the



Enterprise crew soon finds itself face-to-face with a man calling himself "Galen," who bears a striking resemblance to Jean-Luc Picard.

Stardate 50893.5: Disobeying orders, Jean-Luc Picard takes the sixth *U.S.S. Enterprise* to Earth to defend the planet against another Borg attack. Picard's knowledge of the Borg helps him thwart the collective's plan to disrupt humans' first contact with Vulcans, but his obsessive anger threatens the safety of his crew.

Clearly, Star Trek characters are not static entities. They develop, grow, and change as the series and movies progress. Sometimes--whether voluntarily (Picard as Galen in "Gambit") or involuntarily (Picard as Locutus in "The Best of Both Worlds")--they pretend to be someone they are not. This section explains how such complex characterizations are represented in the Star Trek Customizable Card Game.

#### A. The Persona Concept

The "persona" concept was introduced into the Star Trek CCG to represent the ability of characters to play a variety of different roles. This concept allows different cards to represent different roles played by certain characters.

Each persona "exists" at a level of abstraction one step higher than personnel cards. If you wish, think of a persona as a discrete sentient entity. Thus, there is one unique individual known to Star Trek fans as Jean-Luc Picard. Throughout all of Picard's personality developments in the television series and movies, and even through Picard's "undercover" work as Galen, his escapist fantasies as Dixon Hill, his assimilation as Locutus, and his fictional "life" as Kamin, something discrete and unique to Picard is present. Think of this elusive, discrete uniqueness as "the Jean-Luc Picard persona." Remember, however, that a persona is a concept residing one level of abstraction higher than personnel cards. Therefore, there is no card that "is" the Jean-Luc Picard persona.

There are, however, a number of cards representing roles played by Jean-Luc Picard. These include two Jean-Luc Picard cards (Premiere and First Contact), Galen, and Locutus of Borg; whether we will ever see Dixon Hill and Kamin cards, only time will tell. Such cards are referred to as "instances" (the early terminology used by Decipher) or "versions" (the more recent terminology used by Decipher) of a particular "persona." It is inaccurate terminology, in Star Trek CCG terms, to say that Locutus of Borg "is a persona of Jean-Luc Picard." It is accurate terminology to say that Locutus of Borg "is a version of the Jean-Luc Picard persona," or that Galen is a version of the Jean-Luc Picard persona, or that Jean-Luc Picard (First Contact) is a version of the Jean-Luc Picard persona, or that Jean-Luc Picard (Premiere) is a version of the Jean-Luc Picard persona. No personnel card ever "is" a persona. Each personnel card is always a version of some persona.

(It is interesting to note that the Star Trek CCG terminology for personas is exactly backwards of the usage in standard twenty-first century English. A "persona" is defined by the *American Heritage Dictionary* as "The role that one assumes or displays in public

or society; one's public image or personality, as distinguished from the inner self." In Decipher's official terminology, however, the various roles are "instances of the persona" and the "inner self" is the "persona.")

The only reliable way to determine whether two cards are versions of the same persona is by applying two simple rules. First, personnel cards are versions of the same persona if they have exactly the same name. Second, any personnel name printed in boldface in a lore box names a persona; any card with that name printed in boldface in its lore box, or as the name of the card, is a version of that persona. There is no hard-and-fast rule for reasoning out whether two personnel cards are versions of the same persona.

Nevertheless, the pattern seems to be that personnel cards representing the same physical being in a single basic time frame are versions of the same persona, while personnel cards representing versions of a personality across different universes or time frames are not versions of the same persona. Thus Galen and Locutus are versions of the Jean-Luc Picard persona because they represent the same physical being in the same basic time frame (the Next Generation/Deep Space Nine/Voyager "present"). Admiral Picard represents the same personality, but not the same physical being, since he is part of Barash's illusion, so he is not a version of the Jean-Luc Picard persona. Lt. (j.g.) Picard represents the same physical being, but in a Q-induced alternate timeline, so he is not a version of the Jean-Luc Picard persona. Similarly, the 23rd-century Dr. McCoy and the 24th-century Admiral McCoy represent the same physical being, but since they are from different timelines they do not represent versions of the same personas (getting them together would require time travel). Rely on the rules to determine which cards share a persona, but take comfort in knowing that there is a pattern that appears to govern these rules.

## B. Persona Uniqueness and Swapping

Since multiple versions of a single persona conceptually represent the same individual in a single time frame, each player in a Star Trek CCG game may have only one version of any given persona in play at any given time. No player may have Galen and Jean-Luc Picard in play at the same time, for example, because they are versions of the same persona.

In order to represent the fluidity with which some of these personas operate in the storyline, however, different versions of a single persona may be "swapped" for one another during the course of the game. At the beginning of your turn, if you have a card in play that (a) you played and (b) you control, and you also have a card in your hand that represents a different version of the same persona as your card in play, you may replace the card in play with the card in your hand. For example, you could "swap" your Jean-Luc Picard in play (whom you played and whom you control) with your Galen in hand. This replacement happens at the beginning of your turn; it does not constitute playing a card or reporting a card for duty. Any cards affecting the version in play are transferred to the new version if applicable; inapplicable cards return to their owners' hands.

Example: Suppose you have (Klg) Jadzia Dax and Worf Son of Mogh in play. On a previous turn, both survived a losing battle, and your opponent played Discommendation on both. If you replace (Klg) Jadzia Dax with (Fed) Jadzia Dax, the Discommendation would return to its owner's hand, because Discommendation targets a Klingon; (Klg) Jadzia Dax is a valid target because of her affiliation, but (Fed) Jadzia Dax is not a valid target because she is not Klingon in any way. However, if you replace Worf Son of Mogh with (NA) Worf, the Discommendation would transfer to (NA) Worf because he is a valid target, being Klingon by species.

Persona replacements involving dual-personnel cards must involve both personnel. For example, to replace The Trois in play, you must have a different version of the Deanna Troi persona and a version of the Lwaxana Troi persona in hand.

### C. Infiltrators, Impersonators, and Opposites

Infiltrators were introduced in The Dominion expansion as Founders "morphed" to impersonate specific personnel. The impersonated personnel's name appears in boldfaced italics in the impersonator's lore. However, this does not make the impersonator a version of the persona represented by the impersonated personnel. See The Dominion rules supplement for more details about impersonation.

The Mirror, Mirror expansion introduced another twist: Mirror Universe "opposites" of familiar personnel. Like impersonators, Mirror Universe opposites have another personnel's name in boldfaced italics in their lore; they also have a "Mirror Quadrant" icon identifying their universe of origin. For example, The Intendant has the name "Kira Nerys" in her lore. The Intendant is not an instance of the Kira Nerys persona; she is, instead, the opposite of (any version of) the Kira Nerys persona. You may have both Kira Nerys (or Kira) and The Intendant in play at the same time, since they are not versions of the same persona.

### D. "Any"

Some cards use the term "any" alongside a reference to a Star Trek character. "Any" is a larger concept than a persona. If a card refers to a specific character using the word "any," it refers to any personnel card representing that character. Unless specifically stated, this is not limited to a particular persona representing that character. For example, "any Scotty" (referenced on Blended) currently is equivalent to "Montgomery Scott OR Mr. Scott." Montgomery Scott and Mr. Scott are not versions of a single persona, but they are both "Scotty." Hence either satisfies "any Scotty." Note that impersonators (who have another personnel's name in boldfaced italics in their lore) do not count as "any" such character (the O'Brien Founder is not "any Miles," as referenced on "Pup"). Mirror Universe opposites, [AU] icon personnel, and holographic recreations, however, may count as "any" relevant character; The Intendant is not a version of the Kira Nerys persona, but she does count as "any Kira;" the Romulan Chief O'Brien hologram is not a version of the Miles O'Brien persona, but he does count as "any Miles." Note also that Q-Type Android does not reference "any William T. Riker" (for which Admiral Riker

would serve) but "any version of the William T. Riker persona" (for which Admiral Riker may not serve).

## **For the Tournament Director**

Of course, even if you're the top player in the country, it won't do you much good if you don't have any opponents! For that reason, we've included a brief section on creating a tournament scene in your area.

### **For the Prospective TD**

By Fritz Meissner

You and your buddies have been playing ST:CCG for a while, maybe a few years, even. It's a great game to play casually every now and then, but what if you want something more? Maybe you want regular play, or just more bragging rights. There really is no substitute for tournaments. If there aren't any in your area, you're going to have to experiment with finding players and running your own. Here are some ideas (mine and others') on getting regular tournaments going.

#### Step 1: Make Contacts

Speak to your local card shop's owner. They'll often be able to tell you, even if just by looking at how much they're selling, whether there are other players around that you don't know about. Maybe other people have been leaving contact numbers at the shop, looking for more players. Ask if you can leave your number with the shop assistants, or - even better - make a poster advertising ST play and ask if you can put it up in the shop.

Next, check the WNOHGB player registry (you can do a search by area) and see if anyone in your area is registered. Ask about people living in your area on the ST:CCG mailing list and BBS. There is also a newsgroup for ST:CCG, [rec.games.trading-cards.startrek](mailto:rec.games.trading-cards.startrek) where you might be able to find a few people.

Another good place to look is in groups of sci-fi or fantasy fans. The local Trek society or convention is ideal. I've discovered that many trekkies will jump at the chance to indulge in a new form of merchandise. Other CCG players are often also open to experimenting with other card games, so long as it doesn't stop them from playing their favorite CCG.

#### Step 2: Organize Regular Playing

Plan to meet your ST:CCG playing friends regularly. A weekend day is usually best for this as otherwise people might not be able to make it because of work or school commitments. Make sure that when you're playing, you play in a visible location where passerby might see you playing and take an interest. Also, let your local retailers know when and where you're playing so that they can tell people when to be there.

#### Step 3: Encourage New Players

If someone expresses an interest in learning the game, be (or at least act) eager to show them. If you want new players, it's no use being slow about it. You have to capture their attention before another game gets them. If at all possible, sit them down immediately and teach them. If you're in the middle of a game, get someone else to show them, and if no-one has a spare deck or the person has to leave, make sure you have a way of contacting them. As soon as you can, arrange a time to meet them and play.

To start players off, you might want to build them a deck of commons. If you can, ask players to help you out with unwanted commons and uncommons. Don't be afraid to allow someone to take the cards home, unless you need the cards you loaned them. Give them a week or two to read over the rules and take a look at the deck you built, and find out why you put each card in.

You might be called on to recommend which cards a player should start with. There are a large number of entry level products available in ST:CCG - try and get different people to buy differently, so you don't just end up with five Klingon battle decks at every tournament. In my experience, the best way to start is with a SD2 or one of the Tribbles Preconstructed decks. If they're looking to spend a bit more, an anthology or OTSD might be the way to go. I tend to warn people away from sets like the Dominion, First Contact or Rules of Acquisition, as these sets are predominantly made up of Dominion, Borg and Ferengi cards, at least until they're ready to spend a fair amount to get what they want.

A side note: as far as I can tell, teaching people the warp speed rules before they learn the game proper is a bad move. Warp Speed is Mickey Mouse Trek, and if it doesn't confuse people (when they have to relearn the rules to play properly) it might put them off anyway, as the rules are very close to those of Young Jedi. As such, it also seems a good idea to steer new players away from Enhanced Premier, as there is no guarantee that they'll receive the cards they'll need to build a fully functional deck. The same goes for Enhanced First Contact - I don't think I've ever opened an EFC pack which could be turned into a playable deck.

#### Step 4: Tournaments

Obviously, the first step is to register yourself as a tournament director with Decipher. If you can't, for whatever reason, get someone in your area to sign up. Decipher's site has a very simple one time sign up form. To become a tournament director, you must be 18 years old and have internet access. Once you're a director, you need to register all your tournaments at least a week in advance on Decipher's web site. This is often an annoyance, but at least you'll be able to advertise the tournament on the web site for other players to see. You'll also need to download Decipher's tournament software to run your tournaments and send in the results.

Once you've registered your tournament with Decipher, you need to let players know about it. Give them a week or two's notice, and let your local shop know about it. You can also place notices in various public places, like library notice boards. Remember,

though, that there's no substitute for word of mouth. Tell your local players, and get them to drag anyone who might be interested along. You might also want to advertise the tournament in nearby towns so that anyone who is planning to make the trip can know in advance when you're running it.

Plan the details of your tournament. How much of entry fee will you charge? It's probably not a good idea not to charge more than you have to, unless the extra money will cover prizes. Again, how much prize support will you have? If you're running a sealed deck tournament, will there be enough of the product available for the expected number of players? You should also let your players know the format and entry fee so that they can come prepared.

You'll also have to decide whether you'll run the tournament with Decipher's software, or on paper. If you're using the software, you'll have to make sure that you have power to run the computer, or that you have a laptop with sufficient battery power to last the day. If you're using paper based commands, make sure that you have enough spare pens on hand - you can't expect everyone who's coming to have their own, and you're bound to lose a few.

If you have eight or more players, that's great, but if you don't, run the tournament anyway. If you have five or fewer players you won't really be able to run a tournament, but you can still play. People will be less likely to turn up the next time if they make the trip and don't get a chance to play.

If you can, try for regular tournaments. If people know that you'll be playing every second Sunday, they can bring new players along without worrying about whether or not they'll get a chance to play.

#### Step 5: Aftermath

More than likely you'll want prizes for your tournament. The best thing, of course, is to persuade Decipher to sponsor your tournament. Drop a quick line to Bruce Umene (tournaments@decipher.com). You might also want to ask your retailer if they're willing to help out - at the very least, they can add some weight to your requests with Decipher. In most parts of the world, Decipher will automatically send your prize support for your next tournament when they receive the results from your last sanctioned tournament; they do ask that you submit them (using the software, over the internet) within a week of the tournament.

If you have no other prize support, you could consider raising your entry fee to cover prizes. Another thing would be for every player to buy one booster. Before the tournament is over, open each pack and place the rare on top. After the tournament is over, let the players choose which booster they want, based on the rare. Obviously, the top players will get to choose first.

To receive sanctioning you have to send the results of your tournament in to Decipher afterwards. Just follow the instructions which come with the software when you

download it. It might also be nice if you let players know where they placed in the tournament, and to let anyone who didn't attend see who played well.

Sanctioned tournaments add a whole new dimension to ST gameplay. For one thing, they allow you to get prize support. Another nice part is that everyone who plays in a sanctioned tournament gets a Decipher ranking. This is a great benefit as people will be able to track their performances against players across the world. If your area doesn't already have a regional qualifier for the World Championships, your tournament will alert Decipher to the fact that you have players, and you might even be included in the next championships circuit.

See you at DecipherCon!

## Conclusion

All good things must come to an end; in this case, the end was our deadline. We regret not being able to cram even more good stuff into this book...so we're making it available online! To see the articles that didn't quite make the deadline, point your browser to <http://wnohgb.com> and click Tournament Guide and Updates; the password is sevenofnine. You can also learn more about the authors on the website. We hope you've enjoyed this book and feel that it was worth the cost; please feel free to send us your comments at [guide@wnohgb.com](mailto:guide@wnohgb.com)! On the following page, we have included some other resources that you might find of interest.

## Online Resources

### Online Resources

Well, there's only so much we can pack into one book; check out these resources online!

[www.decipher.com](http://www.decipher.com) - Decipher's website. Includes images of all cards, a tournament locator, and bulletin boards for the discussion of ST:CCG.

[www.milligan.edu/rcheard/stccg/](http://www.milligan.edu/rcheard/stccg/) - **The** site for Borg players; includes tutorials on playing Borg and a comprehensive spoiler list of all cards in PDF format.

[www.kedanya.org](http://www.kedanya.org) - Kedanya station, the chat hub for ST:CCG. The best place to go to find an online game. Includes rules for ST:CCG online and a Hall of Fame.

[www.people.cornell.edu/pages/kem5/Rakal.html](http://www.people.cornell.edu/pages/kem5/Rakal.html) -Major Rakal's Tal Shiar Headquarters. Includes Major Rakal's Romulan Reviews, card lists, and the Major's dilemma resolution guide.

[www.wnohgb.com](http://www.wnohgb.com) - Where No One Has Gone Before, the ST:CCG Strategy Magazine. Includes a BBS, decks, strategy articles, surveys, card database, player registry, and more. Special section for readers of this book.