

by David "Tomek" Bowling

From Qo'nos With Honor

The Anatomy Of A Star Trek CCG World Championship Deck

Since the creation of the Star Trek: Customizable Card Game in 1994, conventional wisdom said that the most powerful STCCG decks used the Federation and took advantage of their multi-skilled personnel. In 1997, Dr. Telek R'Mor was introduced in the first STCCG Anthology. The good doctor quickly became the cornerstone of a powerful, new deck archetype in the STCCG universe, the super-efficient Romulan Space deck. (In fact, the Romulan Space deck was the most prominent deck type at the final round of the World Championships.) It was in this environment that the Klingons upheld their honor by taking 1st and 3rd place at the '97 STCCG World Championships.

The first place Klingon deck was an all-space mission deck focusing on high-point missions. The goal of the deck was to score two outpost missions for 90 points, and then pick up the final 10 points using the Samuel Clemens/Devidian Door combo. During the two rounds of play at the World Championships, this deck went 13 and 2.

The ratio of personnel skills to space mission requirements is not as efficient for the Klingons as it is for the Romulans or Federation. By designating three of the missions in the deck, as primary missions, the number of personnel required for the deck to function was reduced to thirteen. These three primary missions were: Wormhole Negotiations, Warped Space and Investigate Alien Probe. Any of these missions could usually be completed within the first four to six turns of the game. An outpost and the Cryosatellite were seeded at a primary mission. Upon completion, the Betazoid Gift Box in the Cryosatellite was used to select whatever cards were needed to solve the second mission.

Garak, a Cardassian and non-aligned personnel, was also seeded in the Cryosatellite. Using both Klingons and Cardassians made the deck a two-affiliation deck. This allowed two outposts, one Klingon and one Neutral, to be placed during the seed phase. It was rather convenient that the Klingons could use the Neutral Outpost, as well.

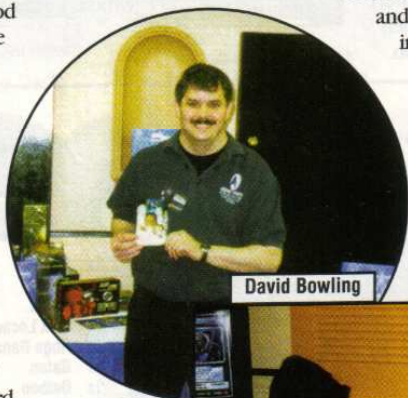
This deck used red-shirting as its primary, dilemma resolution strategy. Rather than risking key personnel in the attempt to overcome dilemmas, an expendable personnel, or red-shirt, would face the dilemmas alone. After the red-shirts cleared away dilemmas, the personnel necessary to solve the missions came in to score points. Since this deck used all-space missions, the number of dilemmas that could effectively be seeded under its missions was reduced. This made red-shirting from outposts even more effective, since most space dilemmas have minimal effect on outposts.

Card advantage played an important part in this particular speed deck. It focused on getting

lots of cards in hand and then into play as quickly as possible. Kivas Fajo-Collector, The Traveler:

Transcendence and Betazoid Gift Box got cards in hand quickly. The Cryosatellite and I.K.C.T' Ong both got personnel into play rapidly and neither could be nullified.

The only counter in the draw deck was Kevin Uxbridge, but five of them were included. This was necessary because generally speaking, an opponent's Events could do the most harm. Also, many of the clas-



David Bowling



Ian Graves & David Bowling

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sic speed decks made use of Kivas Fajo and Red Alert, so Kevin Uxbridge was a key component in slowing down decks which relied heavily on Events.

The dilemma strategy was designed primarily with blocker dilemmas and selective eliminations. It centered around that all-purpose blocker, Shaka, When The Walls Fell, so two Diplomacy were needed for an opponent to successfully complete most missions. Exact dilemma combos differed, based on the number of missions to be covered. Sometimes, I only needed to seed dilemmas under my opponent's missions, while at other times, I had to also protect some of my missions with dilemmas.

These are some of the dilemma combos that frequently showed up:

SHAKA, WHEN THE WALLS FELL/OUTPOST RAID—Seeding this under an opponent's outpost mission allowed me to remove either two Diplomacy or two critical personnel.

SHAKA, WHEN THE WALLS FELL/YUTA/BARCLAY'S PROTOMORPHOSIS DISEASE—Yuta let me selectively eliminate a Medical, Science, or Security, so when my opponent hit Barclay's, the entire crew or away team had expired.

SHAKA, WHEN THE WALLS FELL/BARCLAY'S PROTOMORPHOSIS DISEASE—This combo wasn't quite as powerful without Yuta, but in addition to being a deterrent, I knew where to get 10 points for the Barclay's if I needed it.

CARDASSIAN TRAP/EMPATHIC ECHO—This combo captured unique personnel with the Cardie Trap, or if Empathy was present to get past the trap, it was eliminated with the Empathic Echo. (At first glance, Empathic Echo may seem to have limited value. However, since it doesn't say, "Discard Dilemma," it was a decent blocker because you couldn't get past it until the conditions of Security and Medical were met.)

EDO PROBE/RADIOACTIVE GARBAGE SCOW—Edo Probe usually hit opponents who liked to red-shirt for -10 points, and to get past the Scow, they needed a ship with a tractor beam and 2 Engineers.

The Q's Tent for this deck was a supplemental side deck. This means that the draw deck was designed to function well without ever accessing the Tent. This Q's Tent was primarily used to speed up the deck or respond to emergency situations. Mogh, the Qu'Vat, Arbiter of Succession, Scan, as well as duplicates of the T' Ong, Dathon, and K'chiQ were included for speed enhancement. Kevin Uxbridge, The Devil, Goddess of Empathy and the Alternate Universe Door were present for emergency situations. The two dilemmas, Shaka and Zaldan, were included to counter strategies based

on Q's Planet.

Decipher promised us that First Contact would change everything when it was released, and they were true to their word. A number of key strategies present in the '97 Championship deck will have to be re-thought. The Balancing Act dilemma can seriously impair all space mission decks and Kivas Fajo decks need to beware of Mirror Image and Scorched Hand. Red-shirters need to watch out for Lack of Preparation and Dead End, while counter-heavy decks need to watch out for, The Line Must Be Drawn Here. And the list goes on...

First Contact has totally revitalized STCCG, with the Borg affiliation, significant rules updates, and the introduction of new game mechanics to inspire the next generation of STCCG strategies. First Contact may have rendered some of the strategies of the '97 World Championship deck obsolete, but for that one weekend in November... "It was GLORIOUS!"

Here are the Top 12 players as of final standing on Sunday. The rank in brackets is their beginning rank on Sunday.

1. (1) David Bowling	15 (+470)	Waterford, Michigan
2. (2) Todd Soper	11 (+345)	Seattle, Washington
3. (8) Ray Coleman	9 (+245)	Melvindale, Michigan
4. (4) Paul Mammini	10 (+130)	Novato, California
5. (5) Alexander Bloemen	10 (+121)	Capelle, The Netherlands
6. (3) Ian Graves	10 (+264)	Adelaide, Australia
7. (7) Richard Suchenski	9 (+293)	New Hope, Pennsylvania
8. (9) Stephanie Schultz	9 (+145)	Ann Arbor, Michigan
9. (12) Alexander Scheuwimmer	8 (+205)	Vilnius, Austria
10. (6) Kathy McCracken	10 (+ 41)	Ithaca, New York
11. (11) Brad DeFruiter	8 (+289)	Gunnison, Colorado
12. (10) Evan Lorentz	9 (+128)	Denver, Colorado