



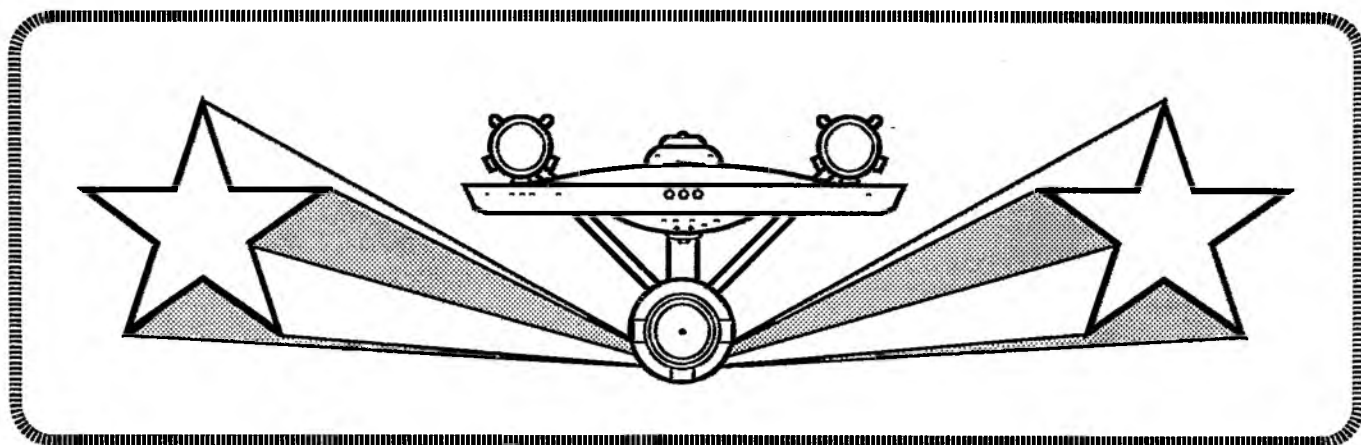
# SFB CAMPAIGN DESIGNER'S HANDBOOK



A MODULE FOR  
**STAR FLEET BATTLES**

**TASK  
FORCE  
GAMES™**

# STAR FLEET BATTLES



## THE CAMPAIGN DESIGNER'S HANDBOOK

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## INTRODUCTION TO CAMPAIGNS

What is a campaign? A campaign is an entire war or portion of a war, told through a series of battles, each leading to the other in an orderly sequence. A campaign is *strategic*—the individual tactical battles (scenarios) have importance, but only as a means to achieve the greater strategic goal. As the saying goes, it is possible to win a battle but lose the war (and, naturally, the reverse holds true as well).

The *strategic goal* is the overall objective—be it political, territorial, or whatever. In contrast, a tactical battle involves a local conflict between units or elements. Think of battles (which we will term “scenarios” from this point onward) as a stepping-stone to the campaign objective, a subset of a greater macrocosm of combat.

### WHY HAVE A CAMPAIGN?

Campaigns have much to offer, but their best feature is adding a sense of overall purpose to your SFB-playing. Many SFBers enjoy individual scenarios, and are content to fight a simulated historical battle or work their way out of an intricate situation. They then leave the gaming table after the scenario has reached a satisfactory conclusion. After a while, however, this can lose its interest—especially when players are part of a group of more than three or four gamers.

At this point the free-for-alls (and their innumerable derivatives) begin, but even these lose their flavor after a time. What’s the point of getting together to face Joe and Mike and Bob yet again? If I get destroyed, what’s the difference? Why should I bother trying to disengage? Why shouldn’t I self-destruct even though I’m barely crippled?

Campaigns answer these questions—they add a sense of *meaning* to your gaming. Suddenly, you *care* if your Federation CA gets the saucer away safely, or if your Legendary Navigator can beam over to a friendly ship in time to avoid perishing with the rest of his ship’s crew. Rules for tracking crew losses, fighter pilot quality, split economic/combat BPV, and so on suddenly have meaning. What happens in one game now affects what will happen in future games, so you now have a reason to come back!

There are other reasons to have a campaign, too:

*Campaigns keep gaming groups together, and keep interest in SFB high.* Since the typical campaign takes months or years to complete, joining one is a long-term commitment. A player who truly gets involved in the campaign is not likely to leave the group, even if his position is overwhelmed by an opponent (he will just join forces with an ally). Friendships grow between all players, ally and enemy alike, as they brag, taunt, and discuss strategies among each other.

*Campaigns give you something to think about during the days between gaming meetings.* If your group meets twice a month, you’ll rarely think about SFB between sessions, but a campaign changes all that. You’ll find yourself discussing options, making decisions, and working out details whenever you have free time. Campaigns offer a wealth of alternatives and choices which only the individual players can make, and these will really get your mind working.

*Finally, campaigns explore a hidden side of SFB.* On the surface, you see only tactics, but in a campaign you enter the strategic level. Your empire has three DNs—where do they need to go? Should you attack another player or guard important worlds? What about economies, production, overall force structure, and so forth? These are things the SFB rules touch on only briefly.

## CAMPAIGN ELEMENTS

Designing a campaign involves the construction of a set of rules wherein each player will build and move his forces in an attempt to accomplish the overall strategic objective (i.e., win the campaign). As the campaign designer, you will write these rules however you like, but before writing anything specific, you should familiarize yourself with the building blocks of a campaign—in other words, the campaign elements.

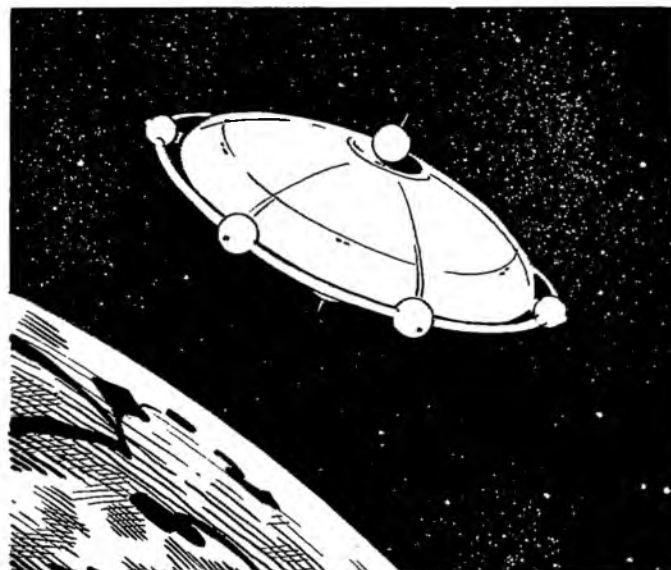
The following list includes many of the elements of a good SFB campaign. Not every campaign needs to have all of these elements, and some have just one or two. It’s up to you, and your gaming group, to decide which of these you wish to use. Once you’ve decided, then you get down to writing actual rules.

### CENTRAL CONTROL

There are two ways to control a campaign—with a GM or without. A GM is a “Gamemaster,” or game controller, who oversees the physical operation of the campaign. The GM is responsible for writing the rules, maintaining the map (if any), controlling any tactical scenarios, making impartial judgments when required, and so on.

If a GM is used, he normally does not participate in the actual campaign itself (other than as its overseer), unless the rules are written so specifically that they cannot be open to interpretation. (Alternately, you could use a democratic process to solve rules disputes.) Otherwise, the GM cannot remain impartial whenever a decision is called for. Impartiality is an absolute requirement in a GM! Many campaigns have fallen apart because a GM makes a judgment viewed by others as fair only to himself or his best friend. Would *you* continue to play in a game when you knew that if you attacked the GM’s buddy, every ruling would go against you?

If a GM is not used, then the rules must be written so that the campaign operates autonomously, without requiring direct control. The movement of units, for example, will usually be visible to all players (otherwise accusations of cheating will arise). GM-less campaigns can also be computerized, with data stored in a computer database and processed by a custom-written program. To prevent cheating, the database can be encrypted, or stored on disk in a sealed envelope. Of course, if your group is lucky enough to include a very trustworthy player, these precautions will not be necessary.



# BUILD YOUR OWN GALAXY!

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**CAMPAIGNS** are the ultimate expression of Star Fleet Battles. Only in a campaign setting does everything — cost, fleets, technology, availability, movement, economics, deployments — come together into a complete picture of war in space!

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**SCENARIOS** are the whole point of a campaign; everything else is designed to deliver your ships to the battle. This handbook includes several options and concepts for generating, setting up, and controlling the size of scenarios.

**RACES:** How to fit them into your campaign so that each can strive to fulfill its destiny.

**AND MORE:** Strategic Sequence of Play, legendary officers (including several new types), outstanding and poor crews, and entirely new rules on espionage, sabotage, and random events!



This product adds new strategic game play situations, ships, and concepts for Star Fleet Battles. You must have at least the SFB Basic Set to use this material. Campaign options are discussed for all of the advanced and supplementary products in the game system; using those options will require those products.

Task Force Games™



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