

CAPTAIN'S LOG #39: SUPPLEMENTAL FILE

IT WAS A DIFFERENT TIME

The supplementary file for *Captain's Log #38* was surprisingly popular, so of course we set out to do another one for *Captain's Log #39*. This will determine if there is a sustainable interest in such a thing, or if the support for the previous effort was primarily a matter of curiosity.

Captain's Log #38 was done at the end of 2008, when we did not have a lot of pressure on the company and design team to do other things. *Captain's Log #39* was a different situation, coming just before *Origins* and at the end of "the worst spring in company history" for things going wrong and taking too long.

So, we did not get this supplementary file done concurrently with the issue (as we did last time) and, as we set out to assemble this document, *Captain's Log #39* is becoming simply a dim memory of something that happened a long time ago.

PUBLISHER'S NOTES

Captain's Log #39 was not as much fun to put together because of the compressed schedule and impending deadline (of *Origins*). Oh, the contents were fun, but the assembly of those contents came during a very intense period with a lot going on, and we were unable to take the time to enjoy doing the issue.

So, let's walk through the issue and let me share some background or other thoughts about things. I will give you some inside information, and that might be interesting. I can even discuss a few things that did *not* get into *Captain's Log #39* and a few that might be in the next one.—*Stephen V. Cole*

HISTORY

The history (fiction) section of an issue always sets the tone, not so much for the issue but for the company while doing it. If we have good fiction on file, we look forward to the issue with joy. If we do not, we look forward to the issue with dread. It really should not be that hard to get good fiction, but every third or fourth issue seems to be that way. We spent months begging writers for stories, and got only two, neither of which was publishable. Stephen V. Cole tried to write two of the story ideas he had spinning in his head, but neither worked out like he wanted them to. Things were getting desperate.

Burden of Duty; Debt of Revenge: We were in a serious state of panic until Petrick found a story in the file from Mark Tippet. The story had some fatal problems which had prevented publication, but previous emails with Mark had fixed some of them, and Stephen V. Cole decided to take a chance on fixing the rest. It worked out surprisingly well.

Like all good stories, this one had to conform to the existing database, and yet, it had to add to that history. As with most stories, Stephen V. Cole added a lot of background context to the story (without changing the storyline itself).

The Second Story: Many issues have two fiction stories. Often, the second story is one that is about a marginal subject which would not make a good cover. The lack of such a story in this issue was partly a matter of not having one to print, and partly a matter of wanting to use the space for other things.

Snapshots: We started doing these one-page articles a few issues ago. Players seem to like them, and I enjoy writing them.

Tholians of Draco has been halfway to publication for two years as Loren Knight and Steven P. Petrick worked out details of what was historical, plausible, and technologically possible. There was an SSD for the scout ship, but Steven P. Petrick had rejected Loren Knight's design as being "too good" for an empire which history insists never built survey ships. We did not have time to do this SSD over again.

The Librarian was, of course, a joke on Jean Sexton, who had been harrasing Stephen V. Cole to make sure that every mention of someone's name was exactly the same. He got even with her by writing this story which conveniently blames Jean for the Federation's early disasters in the General War. (This is why we keep repeating "Stephen V. Cole" in this supplementary file.) This was also a chance to poke a little fun at the original "trek" history in which every Klingon had a name starting with "K".

Plausible Deniability, another story by Stephen V. Cole, grew out of his answer to a question asked on the BBS. Sometimes, when answering such a question, you end up saying "Hey, that's pretty good stuff. Let's use it in *Captain's Log!*" And so we did.

Class History: Players love these, and Stephen V. Cole hates writing them because they are *actual work* as he has to research every published story and scenario to make sure he did not contradict something. In the case of *Captain's Log #39*, he used the short schedule as a convenient excuse to avoid having to finish one of the ones in progress. It would have taken at least a day, and as events proved out, there simply was not a spare day in the schedule.

Developmental History: In the *Captain's Log #38 Supplementary File*, Stephen V. Cole said he might do an article about the Tholian and Hydran heavy fighters in *Captain's Log #39*. It turns out that this is exactly what happened. There was even room to "throw in" the ISC heavy superiority fighter.

COMMUNICATIONS

News: Much of this page is standard and is repeated almost unchanged every issue because it is important information we need to keep in front of the customers and fans. We had some very interesting news this time around, such as the Anniversary Sale and the computer games.

Football: We try to include something funny and this issue the empty spot where we could print it was in this section.

Star Fleet Awards: Some people think that handing out imaginary medals and campaign ribbons is just silly, but Steven P. Petrick and Stephen V. Cole take it quite seriously. They go to a lot of effort to make sure that everyone who worked on projects gets his hard work acknowledged and rewarded.

After Action: This section underwent a fundamental change. We used the space in the issue for stuff *about* the products, and put the "every stupid comma we missed" stuff into this *Supplementary File*. This actually felt more "right" than before.

Command the Future: This is Stephen V. Cole's article to write as it is the strategic vision for the company. He tried very hard to avoid spending the whole time bemoaning what had *not* happened since *Captain's Log #38* and tried to focus on positive