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Introduction

"Those also serve that stand and weld."
War is not just about defeating your enemy on the field of battle; a war can be just as easily won by avoiding it with diplomacy, wonder weapons developed by your scientists in secret, being the best at knowing other people's secrets, on the floor of a stock exchange, in the busy floors of your factories, or the cavernous interiors of mighty shipyards. But, in the end, the matter must be decided one way or another. Cry havoc and let slip the dogs of war...

1.0 Overview

Welcome to Victory by Any Means, a strategic campaign guide. What is a campaign? Simply put, it's a chance to play an entire race (not just a ship or fleet) and conduct an entire war one step at a time. You'll colonize planets, manage resources, build ships, capture territory, and negotiate with your neighbors. The ultimate aim is to control enough of known space to achieve total dominance.

Victory by Any Means (VBAM) can be played with conquest as the only goal or through specially designed scenarios with other victory conditions. VBAM has been designed in such a way that you can use any background setting (with the appropriate source materials) for your campaign. The primary goal of the master book is to provide the basic structure and rules to handle campaign-level issues and resolve even the largest conflicts with relatively fast campaign-level combat. You are encouraged to use other products with VBAM to resolve combats, both in space and on the ground, to add additional flair and detail as desired to your campaigns.

The campaign guide is designed to offer the players a variety of choices in complexity and style of play.

1.1 CM or CM-Less Play

First, before play begins, your group of players will need to decide if they want to play with a campaign moderator (CM) or not. This decision affects the style of the game greatly.

1.1.1 CM-Less Version

This is a very straightforward method of play. Players know their resources and the capability of their empire. The basic structure is given for turn orders, growth and conflict resolution. However, the system remains very flexible.

1.1.2 CM Version

This is a less structured style of play that uses a campaign moderator. This person is responsible for the flow of game play, maintaining any secret aspects and any storyline elements you may work into your game. With a CM, it is possible to be very flexible with players and the campaign in general. The CM may want to introduce a story, giving each player enough pieces to play through the campaign in an almost role-playing fashion.

The CM version also allows the introduction of special secret Intel missions and specialized ships (with the CM's approval). The CM is encouraged to use the basic rules structure, but to also add any modifications to the basic mechanics needed to take special circumstances into account. This results in a more flexible campaign, but with this freedom to improvise comes a responsibility to maintain impartiality and most importantly to use restraint. Special circumstances should be the exception and not the norm.

The use of a Campaign Moderator adds a great deal to VBAM. The most basic area in which a CM can add value is in tailoring victory conditions. If a CM adds a story line to the game, giving each player a motivation to his or her actions by changing their victory conditions, it can produce very realistic (and amusing) situations. This will be especially important in story line-based scenarios where far more is going on behind the scenes than the players are aware of. The use of a CM also allows for secret movement, production, or other very creative ideas.

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1.2 Organization

This book is organized into the following major sections:

***Overview*:** This is the part of the book you are reading now. It includes an introduction, broad statements of scope and goals, rules layout, game requirements and a brief glossary of terms used throughout the game.

Before the Game: This rules section covers what choices and decisions you need to make and what preparations and setup are required before you start a campaign game. This section also includes the generic map and random galaxy generation rules.

Sequence of Play: The heart of the rules, this section goes over a campaign turn's sequence of play step-by-step. During play, this is the section of rules you'll use the most.

Optional Rules: This section contains rules of greater complexity that can be added for those who wish to play their campaign in greater detail and are willing to spend a little extra time for the added complexity.

Source Materials: In this section you will find the data and charts needed to run a campaign in one of many different universes. Potentially source materials for other universe may be published that are compliant with the VBAM system. Again, just replace the provided source materials with those from any compatible universe to use VBAM in other settings.

1.3 Required Materials

You need three things: this book (which you already have), dice (2 six-sided and 2 ten-sided or percentile dice), and plenty of time. A Victory by Any Means (VBAM) campaign will take a lot longer than a typical strategy game. In fact, it will probably take months! Players will need time to conduct diplomacy, decide how to manage their resources, and contemplate their ship movements. Plus, every time you have a battle, it needs to be resolved. The campaign will likely include dozens or perhaps hundreds of battles ranging in size from picket fights to all-out invasions. You just can't do that much fighting in a single weekend!

When you are asked to roll a D100, or roll percentile, simply assign one D10 as the tens dice and the other D10 as the one dice and roll both. So if the first dice is a 4 and the second is an 8, you have rolled a 48 or 48%. If you roll two 0's that means you rolled 100 or 100%.

Of course, it is very important to know which galaxy the campaign is in. You can choose to use the generic map included, a map created with the random galaxy generator (see 2.3.2 Random Galaxy Generator) or whatever map is agreed upon. This is connected with choosing your background universe as some source materials include a map. The players must also decide what time frame to play in. The starting year you decide upon will provide a basis for future technology growth.

1.4 Recommended and Other Materials

A Victory by Any Means game can be much more than a set of rules to run a campaign. This book gives you basic ships, and maps to play a normal game. We encourage you to explore the ever-growing source materials provided by the VBAM team and fans alike. They will provide you with an established backdrop for the type of games you may be looking forVBAM Games will continue to support the Campaign Guide with new source material books well into the future.

Between active efforts of VBAM Games and several fan initiatives, integration rules are being created to provide out-of-the-box compatibility with many of your favorite tactical space and ground systems. This means that VBAM will not only be a campaign engine, but a means to tie together your favorite games! We encourage the use of your favorite game

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systems within your VBAM campaigns. Not only do they bring together the best of both worlds, but also your tactical decisions will bring real weight to the outcome of your battles.

There are many ways to keep track of your game in progress. Some players prefer to bring laptops to games, and track everything electronically. Others prefer to rely on trust pen and paper, assembling their maps on poster board for all the players to see. This is a very popular option for games where the CM runs the opposition, and all the players represent various admirals and governors from a single empire working toward a common goal. Outside of the common clipboard and paper, a simple computer spreadsheet is extremely handy for tracking ship data and maintenance costs in even the smallest game.

If you run into any questions or concerns, drop by our mailing list (details available on our website). The VBAM team is available to field questions or discuss game-related topics, or even help you and your players "find your campaign legs" by giving advice and guidance on how to setup your first source material packs. For those CMs and players who are starting out in the VBAM campaign system, the stories and fan-created resources available via the mailing list can be invaluable in pointing you in the right direction or giving you extra ideas as to what you can do in your own campaign.

1.5 Basic Terms

Alliance Treaty: A treaty signed by two or more Allied powers. A power may only be a signator of one Alliance Treaty at any given time.

Allied: Powers that have signed the same Alliance Treaty.

Anti-Ship (AS): Referring to space units, this statistics is used when firing at enemy non-flight units.

Anti-Fighter (AF): Referring to space units, this statistic is used when firing at enemy flights.

Attack Value (ATT or Attack): Referring to ground units, this statistic is the basic attack bonus added to the attacking ground unit's roll.

Attrition (ATR): When referring to a ground unit, its amount of damage a ground unit will take before it is destroyed. When referring to a bombardment of a planet, it's the damage points totaled up to determine the severity of the bombardment.

Attrition Damage: Attrition damage is additional damage scored to a unit less than its Defense Value (DV).

Ballistic: A special unit designation, Ballistic units

Basing Capacity: This represents the number of craft a system or planet can locally support. Planets can base a number of atmospheric ship squadrons equal to the planet's Productivity. Flight basing is equal to a planet's utilized Productivity squared.

Bombardment Point: Space units generate bombardment points, which are then used to perform orbital bombardment missions.

Campaign Moderator (CM): The individual who runs a Victory by Any Means campaign for a group of players.

Campaign Strategic Combat Resolution (CSCR): A strategic-level campaign combat resolution system, the CSCR allows players to resolve campaign battles without the need for or as a supplement to other third-party tactical combat systems.

Capital System: The system that serves as the head of a power's government. Only one Capital system may exist per power at any given time. By default, the homeworld of a race is its Capital system. Capitals can be moved, but this requires time and financial expense.

Carrying Capacity: Although this statistic is

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