



# Cruel Void

*Ship to Ship Combat in a Vacuum*

Version 1.2

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## Political Background

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The history of how the Earth gave forth its billions into Near Space is one best left to the Imperial Official Historians (although the best account is still to be read in Rin Ting's highly acclaimed historical blockbuster novel *The Upward Path*, which contains a thinly disguised revisionist version divergent from the Official History). Hiram Codd's account is somewhat more accessible though often criticised for being too populist.

In short, mankind, after a brief experiment into a unified global government, finally made the technological leap to the stars. The pressures that had forced the creation of the first United Nations Government were released and mankind swiftly fell back into its traditional (and some would say instinctive) cultural stereotype of a loose association of warring tribes.

Those tribes had the technological and economic muscle that comes with the control of whole worlds. As was the case back on Old Earth, humankind managed to come up with a wide variety of original cultures, political systems and economic structures - the more so when, during the colonial phase many ethnic and cultural minorities were moved or encouraged to move from regions where they had for many years been perceived as a source of 'troubles'. These original minorities, faced with entire worlds to colonise and develop found a new energy and grew in ways that would have been impossible or even unthinkable on old Earth.

In the same way, adherents to unpopular or antisocial political beliefs found that they could carve out a homeland in the image of their ideal societies. Many of these failed and died, unmarked and unlamented, on the worlds of their choice. Some, however, blossomed and grew in a way that could not have occurred back home.

The same was true of religious groups, who could follow the dictates of their God or Ethos without the constraints of global popular opinion or the corrupting influence of other beliefs or alternate views.

And so, over a couple of hundred years, the Sphere of Mankind grew and developed into a political entity similar to a bigger version of Old Earth with its diverse races and political groupings. It was, however, not quite like Earth because the various factions were not quite so closely packed. This gave room for a more 'live and let live' political status quo. The wars of extinction common in mankind's early history had less relevance to an interstellar mankind where entire planets worth of living room were available for the various populations.

That is not to say that mankind lived at peace with itself. That would have been too much to hope for. Violence proved to be endemic. The bottom line for interstellar power is the ability to enforce or coerce. This means fleets of spacegoing combat vehicles.

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For technological reasons, fleets cannot be big if they are expected to move over interstellar distances. Similarly, they can be very big if they only have an interplanetary capability. Planets with a large, well developed, industrial base can build enough orbital weapons or local warships to defeat any combination of hostile interstellar fleets. Result - there are no big wars of invasion or extermination involving the major worlds.

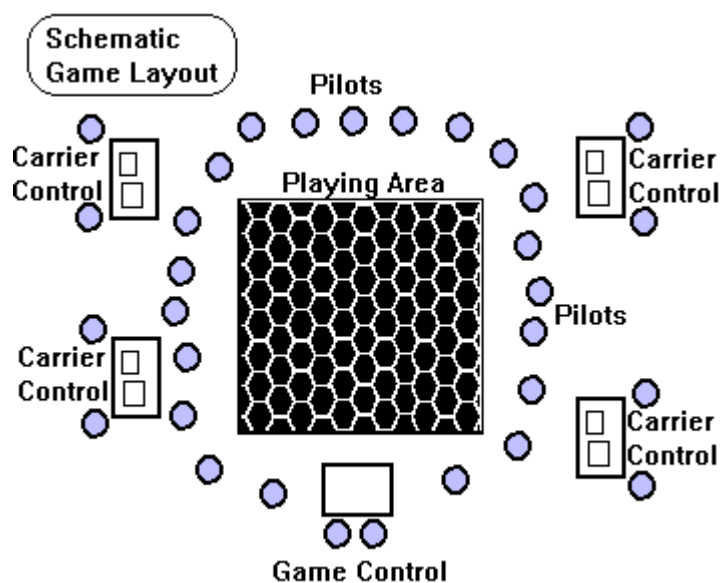
This leaves the weaker, poorer, or smaller worlds as the hunting ground for what has become the interstellar Colonial Powers and The Empire.

Wars in space tend to be fought over minor worlds where two or more interstellar powers put forth their fleets to meet some specific local objective. In these actions, therefore, defeat is not a matter of national survival; so battles tend to be fought to a logical break-off point, not to the death. After all, an interstellar-capable "fleet in being" is much more important and valuable than some backwater colony.

## GAME LAYOUT

The game is built around teams of 8-10 players, most of whom are single ship commanders. Players have specific named characters who accumulate experience, honours and awards, promotion and become better pilots as they fight a series of space dogfights in trying to achieve various scenario-specific objectives.

The main playing area is a large hex-grid, and the players are seated around this grid. Each player has an A4-sized 'control panel' sheet which contains information about their craft's status, combined with an orders sheet, on which they write their movement orders for the turn.



Players move their own models on the hex grid, under the supervision of

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Game Control, who has the final say in rule interpretation and operations.

Often, several battle grids are laid out where an engagement consists of a number of widely separated missions launched from the same carrier or carrier group.

In some scenarios, certain players may be separated from the grid to represent non-combatants or high command roles, and they will communicate with the pilots by intercom or the equivalent.

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## Player Teams

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Depending on the nature of the scenario, most teams will represent the Command and Pacifier Crews of a single Carrier.

Where an entire fleet is operating, the Higher Command teams will control the various Carriers (or other more specialised craft if used).

The basic **Carrier Team** is composed of:

- **Captain:** In control of the team, directs the operation of the Carrier, its movement etc.
  - **Operations Officer:** Responsible for arming or re-arming the Pacifiers, briefing crews and directing the Pacifier Group in battle.
  - **Pilots :** A number (usually 5-8) of Pacifier Pilots: Control the individual Pacifiers on a one per ship basis.
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## The Technology

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The key elements of the technological background are :

1. Faster Than Light Drive (FTL). Without going into a boring technical treatise, the points to remember are:

- FTL only operates safely beyond a certain distance from a star (or planet);
  - It moves the ship through Hyperspace and interception, communication or combat are impossible while in Hyperspace.
  - There is an upper limit to the size of the vehicle that can be sent
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though Hyperspace. This is a immutable physical law.

■ FTL drives are VERY EXPENSIVE.

2. The main type of fighting starship is the Carrier. This is a self-contained fighting force; a main FTL-equipped Carrier armed with its own close-in weapons, marines, landing craft and its main striking force; a number of single-man craft known as *Pacifiers*. The basic weapons technology was developed many centuries ago during the Great Creative Era. Little has changed since then, and the Pacifier's weapons fit into a number of well-developed categories. The mix can be altered to fit particular missions or the tactical doctrine of their owning fleet.

3. Artificial gravity and inertial dampening technology does not exist. This means that ship crews suffer the effects of acceleration - especially pilots.

4. Force shield, invisible stealth fields etc. do not exist in this universe.

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## Sequence of Play

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The following sequence is a guide to the order things should happen in each game turn.

Players will normally only have around 2 or 3 minutes to write their orders, and about 5-10 minutes (at most) to work out the results of each game turn.

1. Players Write Orders
  2. Players Show orders (place order sheet face up on the table)
  3. Move all ship models (movement is simultaneous)
  4. Roll for collisions (If any ships are co-located)
  5. Pilots decide to release Flares or Chaff
  6. Pilots announce firing if they wish and designate targets
  7. Players (under Game Control supervision) work out the results of firing. All damage is simultaneous.
  8. Remove **last turn's** flares and chaff counters.
  9. Back to Writing Orders again.....
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## Movement

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Movement is on a hexagon grid.

Each Pacifier has a certain amount of fuel which is used to manoeuvre the craft

Movement is Newtonian - that is it costs no fuel to continue moving at a constant velocity in a straight line, but it *does* cost fuel to accelerate, decelerate or change direction.

The fuel costs are as follows:

Action	Fuel use
Change direction by 60 degrees.	1 unit per hex of current velocity. i.e. if the vessel is going at 6 hexes, it takes 6 fuel to turn 60 degrees (and continue to move at 6 hexes in the new direction).
Accelerate or Decelerate by 1 hex velocity	1 fuel per hex changed.
Rotate up to 180 degrees	1 fuel unit.

The ship may have a facing that is independent of the direction of travel, and the current direction of travel is marked by an arrow on the model's base (which may be oriented differently to the facing of the ship model and its weapons).

### Action Points

Each turn the pilot has a number of '**Action Points**' representing the number of things he can do and think about in the turn. Better (i.e. more experienced) pilots have more action points. The typical pilot has 2 or 3 Action Points.

The following things take **One Action Point** to do:

- **Fire a Weapon - must specify which weapons system is going to be used (representing 'finger on the trigger').**
- **Launch Chaff or Flares**
- **Issue a Manoeuvre order**
- **Communicate with another ship outside the tactical net**
- **Bale Out**
- **Use Scanners (Optional)**
- **Activate/Deactivate Autopilot (optional)**

## G-Force

There are limits placed on acceleration/deceleration by the ability of the pilot to withstand the G-forces of high velocity manoeuvring.

The simple way of keeping track of this is to look at the total fuel used in a single turn. This is a simple approximation of the stresses the pilot is undergoing at the time.

For a normal human being there is a g-force resistance of 5. If the amount of fuel used exceeds this limit, roll 1d10 and score that surplus OR LESS to black out.

If the pilot blacks out, the player is removed from the game for the period of the blackout, which is normally 1d6 turns. The ship continues moving in a straight line at its current velocity until the pilot recovers.

## Order Writing

Movement orders must be written in secret for each move because all movement is simultaneous.

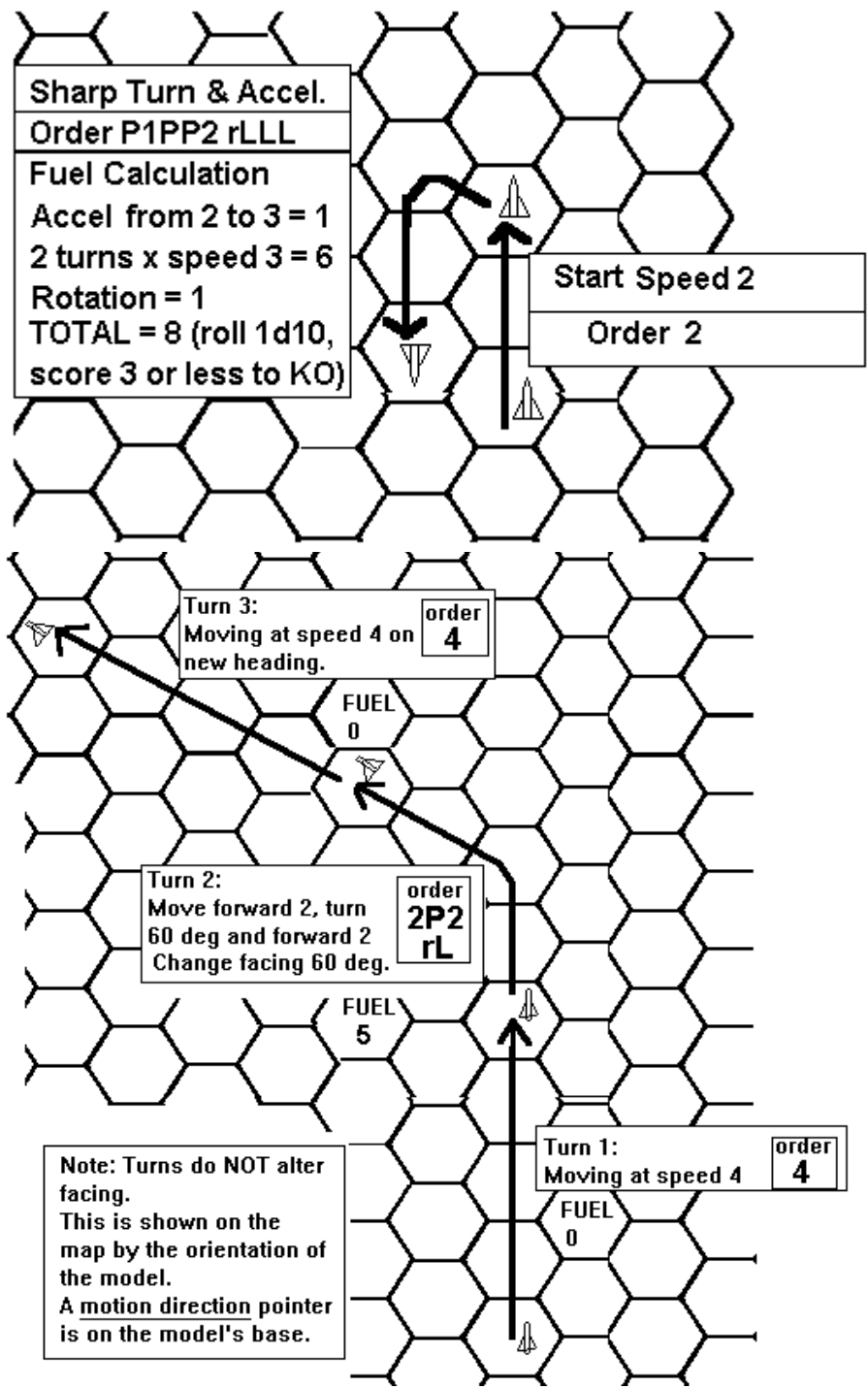
When everyone has written, all players must put their written order face up on the battle grid table *for all to see*, and they may not change it and are committed to that order, unless actually impossible. In the case of illegal or impossible orders, Game Control will correct it to the nearest legal order.

Standard Notation is as follows:

A	Accelerate
D	Decelerate
1, 2, 3 etc.	Number of hexes to accelerate or decelerate
rL60	rotate left 60 degrees
rL120	rotate left 120 degrees
rL180	rotate left 180 degrees
rR60 etc.	rotate right 60 degrees etc.
P	turn to port 60 degrees
S	turn to starboard 60 degrees
Bale out	activate escape pod
Flare	launch flares
Chaff	launch chaff
Auto On/Off	Activate/Deactivate Autopilot

**Important note:** A change of direction of motion does not alter the facing relative to that direction of motion. So if your ship is facing 60 degrees off the direction of travel before you make a turn, it will still be 60 degrees off after you turn - remember to re-orient.

**EXAMPLES:**



**Autopilot**

If the pilot thinks that he or she might be unable to pilot the pacifier for a while (i.e. if it is likely they will black out), then Pilots may program the autopilot.

Orders must be written down, for as many moves ahead as required. These can include fire orders.

It takes 3 Action Points to do the programming, and one to start the autopilot running or stop it once started.

The autopilot takes over complete control of the Pacifier, so other actions may not be carried out while the autopilot is running.

## Collisions

If several craft end up in the same hex at the end of their movement, then roll 1d6 per craft and if the scores are the same there has been a collision between those craft.

In the event of a collision, each craft takes one damage card.

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## Weapons In General

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Weapon technology has not altered vastly in the last few centuries, the following are the main weapon systems:

**Directed Energy Weapons (DEW):** Basically the two types are the Plasma Weapon and the High Energy Laser. These are very powerful weapons but fairly inflexible to use.

DEW fire along a single line of hexes, directly forward on the craft's current facing. The range is unlimited in game terms, although the effect reduces with range.

**Multi-Cannon:** These are very rapid fire projectile launchers that deliver vast numbers of very fast explosive projectiles into a small area. Their effective range is short, but they are easier to direct than DEW and can be used to cover a wider area within close range.

**Missiles:** These are useful because they are relatively cheap to produce and maintain (unlike DEW) and quite flexible as to use and warhead etc. The main type is the radiation Seeker and warheads can be anything from the more common fragmentation-explosive through pulse-radiation all the way up to nuclear-explosive (although this last has some rather severe consequences).

**Point Defences:** At least some of these are fitted as standard to most Pacifiers. They include Chaff and Flares. Electronic Counter measures are used, but are assumed part of the normal combat environment and not separately represented in the game.

*[Game note: You will observe that that old standard science fiction device the 'force shield' or 'deflector shield' is missing from the list. This is deliberate.]*

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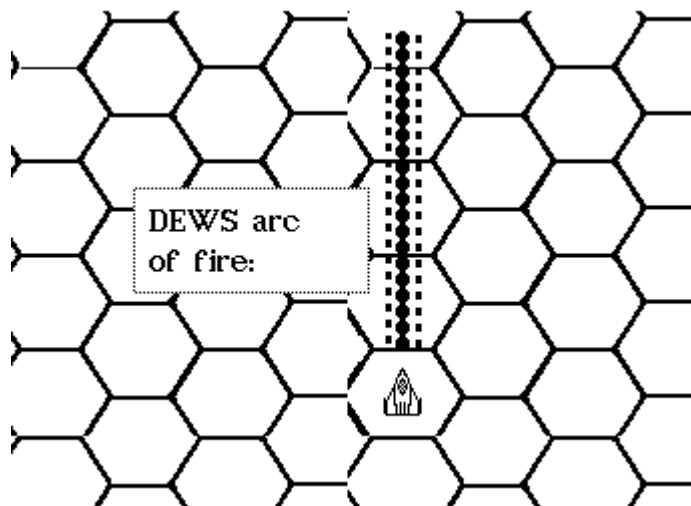
## Weapon Effects

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### Directed Energy Weapons (DEW)

High Energy Laser Light (HELL)  
Plasmatic Annihilation Device (PAD)

These weapons are fixed along the orientation of the ship.  
All have effect along the line of hexes from the current facing.  
A hit is automatic on ALL VESSELS ALONG THAT LINE, although the effect is reduced for second and subsequent targets.



Damage is dependent on range and weapon type:

Range up to	10 hexes	15 hexes	20 hexes	25 hexes	over 25
<b>HELL</b>	3 cards	2 cards	2 cards	1 card	1 card
<b>PAD</b>	6 cards	5 cards	4 cards	3 cards	2 cards

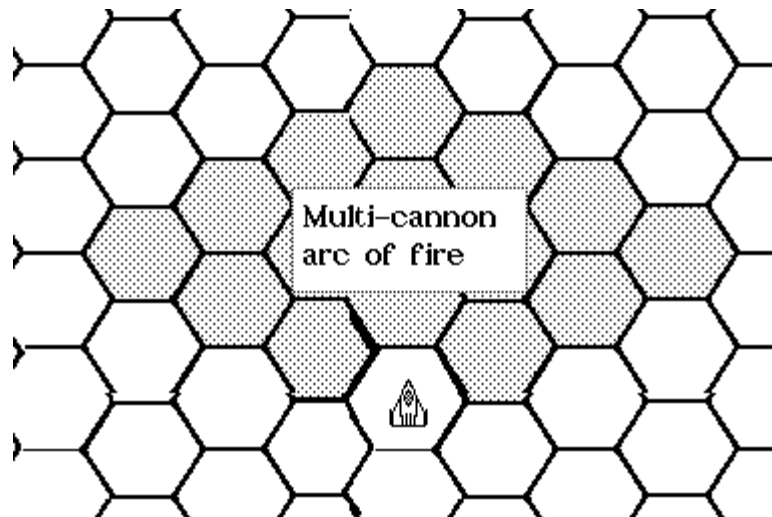
-1 card for each additional target after the first.

These weapons have their own energy packs which become depleted by use.  
The size of battery pack may vary, but typically they hold 6 charges.

Because of their greater size and complexity PADs may not be fitted to Pacifiers, and are generally only found on Carriers and other large vessels.

### Multi-Cannon

This has a range of 3 hexes, but can engage any target in the forward 120 degree arc of the ship.



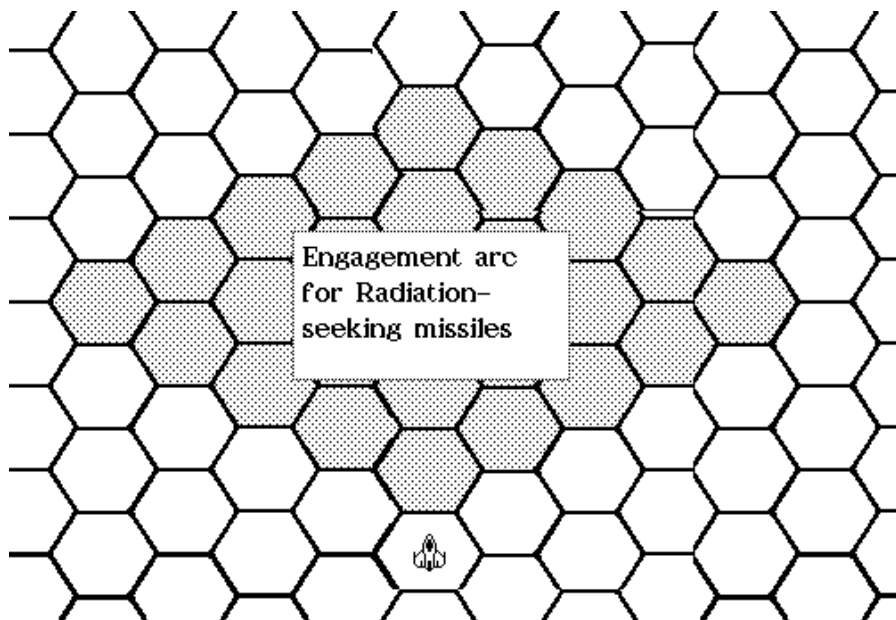
Roll 1d6: Score 2 or better to hit.

-1 if target behind chaff

Damage inflicted is 1 damage card.

### Seeker Missile

This can be fired on any target within the forward 120 degree arc of the firer. It has a range of 5 hexes and homes in on the nearest and/or 'loudest' radiation emitter.



Seek Priorities are (in descending order):

- Nearer rather than further
- Main engine or manoeuvre burns (accelerating/decelerating/turning) - hottest first (i.e. the burn using the most fuel)
- Flares

- Weapon firing
- Silent running (no burns, no weapons).

Roll 1d6, score 2+ to hit.

+1 if target made a fuel burn that turn.

If miss then take next priority target. If equal priorities then roll die for which get hit.

Damage inflicted if it hits is 2 damage cards for frag-ex warhead

## Point Defences

**Flares** are launched at the end of movement.

They are represented by a counter on the map. They can be launched in any direction.

They have the launching vessel's velocity  $\pm 1$  (pilot's choice at the point of launch).

They last for one complete turn (i.e. burning out at the end of the turn following the one they were launched) and have the effect of confusing Radiation Seeking missiles by providing an alternative priority target.

**Chaff** is launched at the end of movement.

They are represented by a counter on the map. They can be launched in any direction.

They have the launching vessel's velocity  $\pm 1$  (pilot's choice at the point of launch). These last for one turn (dispersing at the end of the turn following the one on which they were launched). They have the following effects:

- DEW dispersal. They reduce the effect of a DEW by one damage card (by dispersing the energy a bit).
- Confusing fire-control radar. -1 on Multi-cannon fire, if target behind chaff.

## Damage

Damage mentioned above refers to Damage Cards.

Each player has a pack of damage cards. There are a large number of these and the target that has been hit should take that number of cards and apply the damage listed on them.

A Pacifier can take 12 Hull Hits before it is deemed destroyed

A Carrier can take a lot more Hull Hits (usually about 50), but it is easier to hit.

For this game we will use a standard pack of playing cards, the damage effect

is indicated by the face value of the card:

Card Value	Hull Damage	Other Effects
<b>Ace Spades</b>	0	Hard Point 1 out of action
<b>2 Spades</b>	0	Hard Point 2 out of action
<b>3 Spades</b>	0	Hard Point 3 out of action
<b>4 Spades</b>	0	Hard Point 4 out of action
<b>5 Spades</b>	0	Hard Point 5 out of action
<b>6 Spades</b>	0	Hard point 6 out of action
<b>7 Spades</b>	0	Built in multi-cannon hit and out of action
<b>8 Spades</b>	0	Starboard Manoeuvring jets damaged. No left hand rotation or port turns.
<b>9 Spades</b>	0	Port Manoeuvring jets damaged. No right hand rotation or starboard turns.
<b>10 Spades</b>	0	Forward thrusters hit - no deceleration
<b>Jack of Spades</b>	0	Aft Thrusters hit - no acceleration
<b>Queen of Spades</b>	0	Pilot wounded.
<b>King of Spades</b>	0	Eject mechanism damaged - escape pod inoperative
<b>All Clubs</b>	2	no extra special damage
<b>All Diamonds</b>	1	no extra special damage
<b>All Hearts</b>	1	no extra special damage.
		.

If a hard point is hit that is part of a multi-hard point piece of equipment then that equipment is put out of action.

Pilot Wounds: Pilots can take 8 wounds and survive - on the 9th wound they are dead.

After 3 wounds the pilot is unconscious anyway, so can take no further part in the action.

Wounded pilots deduct 1 from their g-resistance and -1 Action Point per wound.

## Baling Out

Every Pacifier is equipped with an Automatic Escape Pod.

The Pod will automatically eject the Pilot after he or she has been unconscious for six moves.

In the event of the sudden destruction of the Pacifier, roll 1d6 and score 3, 4, 5 or 6 for the Pod to activate in time.

If the pilot wishes to bale out voluntarily then he writes an order ejects in the pod, which has enough fuel to correct velocities and return to the base Carrier automatically (it is assumed that the pilot is wounded or unconscious, so there is no means for the pilot to guide the pod anywhere other than towards the Carrier, or use it for some sort of suicide mission).

The pod ejects from the Pacifier at  $\pm 3$  the Pacifier speed. It has 20 points of fuel to get it back to the Carrier. Pod fuel cannot be used by the Pacifier as

an extra fuel reserve.

Since they are small and difficult to detect, we can further assume that escape pods cannot easily be shot down, and are therefore usually ignored as potential targets.

If fired on they have a -2 on any die roll to hit.

Any hit destroys the pod and its contents.

### **Nuclear Weapons [Optional Rule]**

Electro-Magnetic Pulse (EMP) affects the entire playing area and lasts for 20 moves and is as follows:

- Loss of Communications : Players may not communicate with each other for 20 turns.
- Loss of Control : ships are unable to alter their course or velocity.
- No radiation guidance : radiation guided missiles cannot function.
- Directed energy weapons cannot function.
- -1 on cannon
- -2 on radiation seeking missiles

Immediate Direct Energy Effects:

2 hex radius = total destruction of everything

10 hex radius = 5 damage cards

All over 10 hexes = 1 damage card

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## **Ship Configurations**

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The basic *Pacifier* craft has 6 'hard points'. These can be used to fit whatever mixture of weaponry or equipment fits a particular scenario or the needs of the fleet.

In normal circumstances, *Pacifier* pilots are not allowed to choose their own weapon fit until they have proved themselves competent by completing 3 successful missions. The availability of some weapons may be constrained by the scenario.

As part of the basic *Pacifier* spaceframe the following equipment is standard:

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- Multi-Cannon with 10 bursts of ammo
- 4 Flares
- 4 Chaff
- Ship-to-ship secure communications
- Escape Pod
- Navigation computers and the basic engines etc. with 30 fuel.
- 6 Hard points for additional equipment and weapons (see below)

The hard point requirements of the various weapons/equipment are as follows:

System	Hard Points
Multi-Cannon + 5 ammo	1
HELL + 6 charges	3
Missile (any type)	1
Flare Pod (4 flares)	1
Chaff Pod (4 chaff)	1
Extra Fuel Tank (18 fuel)	1
Extra cannon ammo (x10)	1
Magnetic Tow-Grab Unit	1
Rescue Life-Support Pod	2
Long Range Comms Pod	1
FTL Drive	6
DEW Extra Energy Pack	1
Atmosphere Operations Unit	2
Enhanced Repairs Units	1

These can be mixed and matched as necessary, and provided the necessary equipment is available on the Carrier (the precise equipment holdings of the Carrier are defined in the scenario).

### Standard Pacifier Types

<p><b>Mark 1 Attack Pacifier</b></p> <p>2 x Multi-Cannon - rear facing</p> <p>1 x HELL - forward firing</p> <p>DEW Energy Pack</p>	<p><b>Mark 2 Patrol Pacifier</b></p> <p>5 x Seeker Missiles</p> <p>Extra Fuel Tank</p>
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<p><b>Mark 3 <i>Ripple</i> Gunship</b></p> <p>2 x Multi-Cannon - forward facing</p> <p>2 x Multi-Cannon - rear facing</p> <p>Extra Cannon Ammo</p> <p>Extra Fuel Tank</p>	<p><b>Mark 4 <i>Hellblazer</i> DEWShip</b></p> <p>2 x HELL - forward firing</p>
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## Jury Rigging

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Pacifiers carry some automated repair systems, and pilots can sometimes do something to re-jig temporarily systems that have become damaged.

Jury Rigging takes 3 Action Points to do at all.

Roll 1d6 and score 6 to successfully rig up a temporary repair.

Score 5 or 6 if an ERU is fitted.

The effects of repair are as follows:

Damage Repaired	Effect of Repair
Forward/Aft thrusters	Can Accelerate/Decelerate again but limited to acceleration/deceleration of 1 only.
Rotation/Manoeuvre thrusters	Can turn/rotate again but limited to 60 degree rotations, and maximum use of 3 fuel for a turn in a move.
Pod Eject Mechanism	Pod will eject on command, but automatic eject not repairable, and you cannot dice for eject in the case of sudden destruction.

It is not possible to jury rig destroyed hard points, or multi-cannon.

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## The Carrier

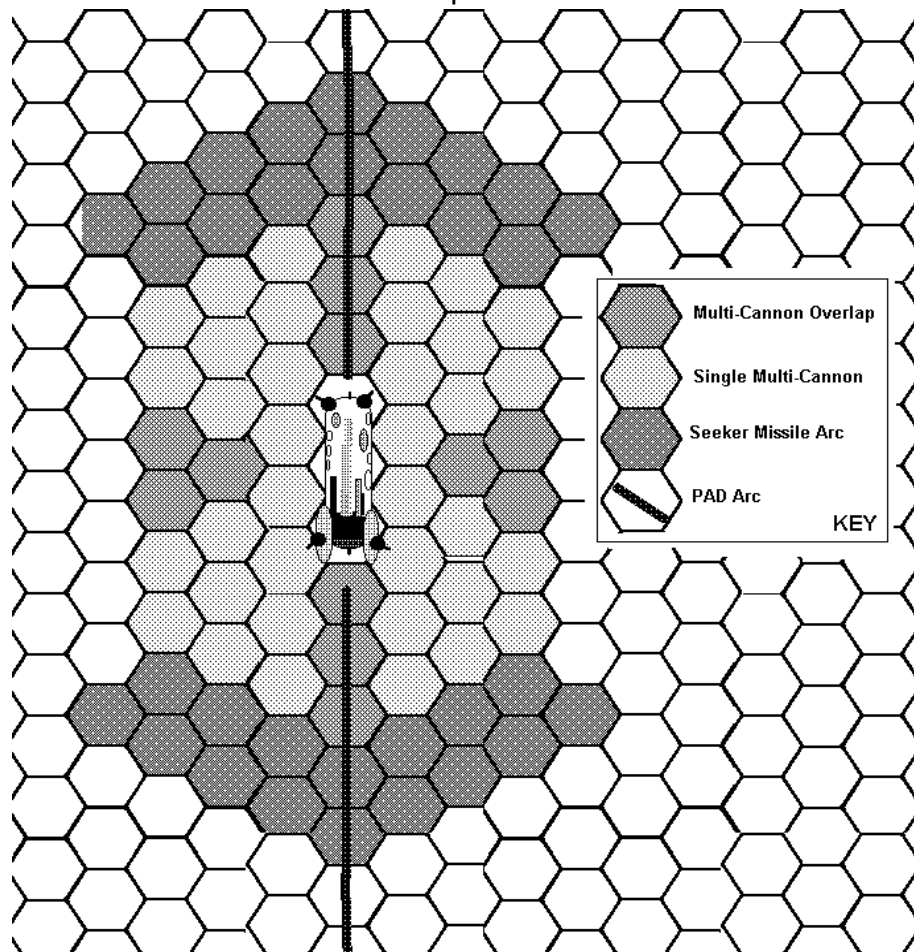
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The Carrier occupies several hexes and in game terms is very unmanouverable.

Much of the time there will only be the carriers of one side in play (in which

case the Carrier Captain/Operations Officer may crew extra Pacifiers).

The Carrier has a different set of operational rules since it is not usually



manoeuvring and fighting and has a great deal more power and equipment on board.

The Carrier Staff make decision concerning power allocation to the various tasks in the ship.

They have a control panel with the various functions marked on it, and allocate power counters to each function each turn. The main functions are:

## MOVEMENT

1 Power to accelerate/decelerate by maximum of 1

2 Power to engage the FTL drive.

1 Power to rotate the Carrier by 60 degrees.

Turning uses essentially the same rules that apply as for Pacifiers except that only one power per turn can be used for turning.

If speed is greater than 1 then it takes several moves to burn enough for a turn. E.g. If moving at 3, burn for 3 consecutive move to make a 60 degree turn on the third move.

**COMBAT**

1 Power per system to operate any part of the main defensive armament.

1 Power to launch chaff and flare patterns.

**PACIFIER OPERATIONS**

1 Power to warm up a Pacifier in Store

1 Power to bring a newly warmed up Pacifier into operations deck from store.

1 Power to re-arm and refuel one Pacifier.

1 Power to launch a Pacifier. Launch velocity is Carrier Velocity  $\pm$  up to 5

Pacifiers can be recovered free provided the relative velocity is 5 or less. For every difference of 1 greater than 5, both the carrier and the pacifier take 1 damage card.

1 Power can be used to absorb 1 hex of excess velocity.

**STATISTICS**

Typically a Carrier will have about 5 power units to distribute each turn.

It has 52 hull points.

It has power storage cells with a capacity of 5. Batteries can be recharged by allocating power to 'recharging'.

Carrier occupies 3 hexes. It has :

2 x PAD oriented along the major axes. These do not have energy cells but are charged from ship's power.

2 x missile launchers on direction of main axis (can be loaded with any of the missiles currently in stock)

4 x Multi-cannons with 40 ammo each

8 x Pacifiers on operations deck

2 x Pacifiers in Store.

Maximum acceleration: 1

Maximum manoeuvre burn: 1

Maximum rate of rotation:

60 degree per move

**Normal Stocks**

80 Pacifier fuel tank recharges.

80 Pacifier Multi-cannon ammo reloads

320 chaff

320 flares

120 Seeker missiles

plus various other add-ons as the scenario dictates.

## DAMAGE CARDS

The carrier has its own set of damage results.

Card	Hull Damage	Specials
<b>Ace of Spades</b>	1	Cannon 1 out of action
<b>2 of Spades</b>	1	Cannon 2 out of action
<b>3 of Spades</b>	1	Cannon 3 out of action
<b>4 of Spades</b>	1	Cannon 4 out of action
<b>5 of Spades</b>	1	Missile Launcher 1 out of action
<b>6 of Spades</b>	1	Missile Launcher 2 out of action
<b>7 of Spades</b>	1	Missile Launcher 3 out of action
<b>8 of Spades</b>	1	Missile Launcher 4 out of action
<b>9 of Spades</b>	1	Forward PAD out of action
<b>10 of Spades</b>	1	Aft PAD out of Action
<b>Jack of Spades</b>	1	Bridge hit - Ops Officer wounded
<b>Queen of Spades</b>	1	Bridge hit - Captain wounded
<b>King of Spades</b>	1	Engine hit - -1 power output
<b>Ace of Clubs</b>	1	Pacifier Launch Station 1 out of action
<b>2 of Clubs</b>	1	Pacifier Launch Station 2 out of action
<b>3 of Clubs</b>	1	Pacifier Launch Station 3 out of action
<b>4 of Clubs</b>	1	Pacifier Launch Station 4 out of action
<b>5 of Clubs</b>	1	Pacifier Launch Station 5 out of action
<b>6 of Clubs</b>	1	Pacifier Launch Station 6 out of action
<b>7 of Clubs</b>	1	Pacifier Launch Station 7 out of action
<b>8 of Clubs</b>	1	Pacifier Launch Station 8 out of action
<b>9 of Clubs</b>	1	Pacifier Warm-up Station out of action
<b>10 of Clubs</b>	1	Main Pacifier transfer machinery out of action (new Pacifiers cannot be brought up for operations).
<b>Jack of Clubs</b>	1	Electrostatic Recovery System out of action - Pacifiers must match velocities to land.
<b>Queen of Clubs</b>	1	Pacifier refuelling system out of action
<b>King of Clubs</b>	1	Pacifier re-arming system out of action
<b>Ace of Diamonds</b>	1	Chaff dispensers out of action
<b>2 of Diamonds</b>	1	Flare dispensers out of action
<b>3 of Diamonds</b>	1	Canteen hit - any players on the carrier actually getting a cup of tea are wounded.
<b>4 of Diamonds</b>	1	Sick Bay hit
<b>5 of Diamonds</b>	1	Pacifier Ready Room hit - all pilots on Carrier take one wound.
<b>6 of Diamonds</b>	1	Long range communications out of action
<b>7 of Diamonds</b>	1	Power Storage cells out of action
<b>8 of Diamonds</b>	1	Power Storage cells discharged
<b>9 of Diamonds</b>	1	FTL drive disabled
<b>10 of Diamonds</b>	1	Left/Port manoeuvre jets out of action
<b>Jack of Diamonds</b>	1	Right/Starboard manoeuvre jets out of action
<b>Queen of Diamonds</b>	1	Aft thrusters out of action
<b>King of Diamonds</b>	1	Forward thrusters out of action
<b>All Hearts</b>	1	no special damage

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## DAMAGE CONTROL

Carrier operation can divert power to assist the damage control team. Roll 1d10 against the power used as follows:

<b>Power</b>	<b>Score to repair a system</b>
1	0
2	0 or 1
3	0, 1 or 2

No more than 3 power can be used for damage control.  
Only systems can be repaired. Hull damage cannot be repaired without return to a space dock..

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## Big Ship Types

In some scenarios, other large interstellar warships will appear. Here is a summary of their basic statistics.

<b>Type</b>	<b>Hull Value</b>	<b>Main Weapons</b>	<b>Secondary Weapons</b>	<b>Pacifiers Carried</b>	<b>Chaff + Flares</b>	<b>Max Accel.</b>
<b>Battleship</b>	120	4 x PAD 4 x HELL	2 x Multi-Cannon	2	40	1
<b>Heavy Cruiser</b>	80	2 x PAD 2 x HELL	2 x Multi-Cannon	1	40	1
<b>Light Cruiser</b>	40	4 x HELL	4 x Multi-Cannon	none	40	1
<b>Destroyer</b>	30	2 x HELL	4 x Multi-Cannon	none	60	2
<b>Assault Landing Craft</b>	30	Bombing capability	4 x Multi-Cannon	2	100	2
<b>Troop Transport</b>	30	2 x Multi-Cannon	n.a	none	40	1
<b>Logistic Support Craft</b>	40	2 x Multi-Cannon	n.a.	none	20	1

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## Fleet Organisation & Promotion

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### Personal Advancement

As a part of a military hierarchy, there is a rank structure and the prospects for promotion. What follows is the Imperial system - which forms the basis for most fleets. Differences will be noted in specific team briefings where appropriate.

Ranks (in order of seniority):

IMPERIAL GRAND ADMIRAL

ADMIRAL OF THE BLACK

ADMIRAL OF THE WHITE

ADMIRAL

VICE ADMIRAL

REAR ADMIRAL (Typically commands a force of several Carriers)

FLAG CAPTAIN (COMMODORE)

CAPTAIN (Typically commands a Carrier or other major vessel)

COMMANDER (Typically commands a squadron of several flights of Pacifiers)

LIEUTENANT COMMANDER (Typically 2nd in command of a squadron)

LIEUTENANT (Typically commands a flight of 4 Pacifiers)

ENSIGN (typically 2nd in command of a flight)

PETTY OFFICER (Minimum rank for Pacifier pilots)

ABLE SPACEMAN

ORDINARY SPACEMAN

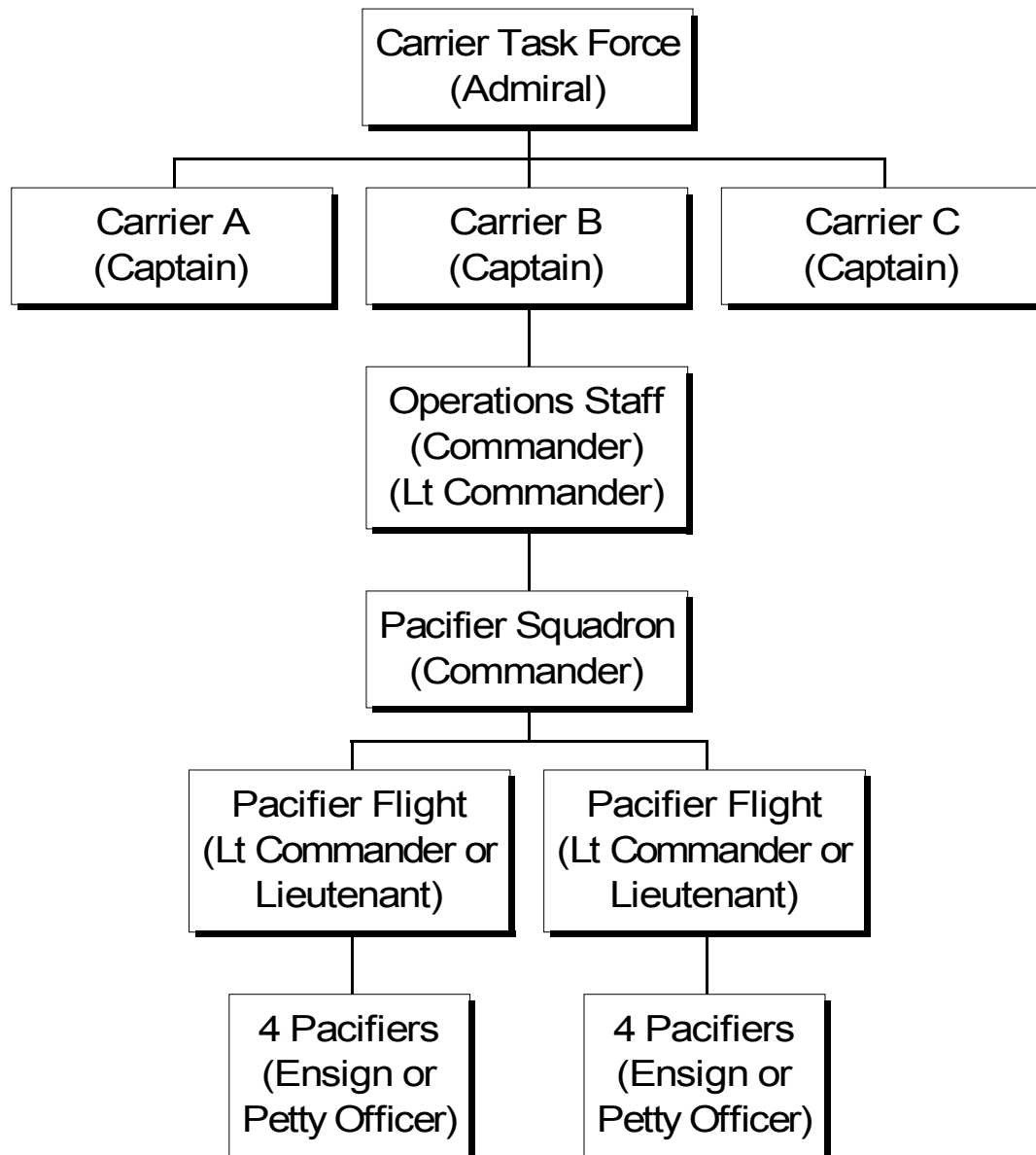
SPACE CADET

Players get a specific rank. Promotion is on merit, and provided there is a gap in the rank structure for the force they are with.

### Multiple Roles

In some cases, players will be allowed to have more than one character. They may not be in play in the same scenario. Mostly alternative characters serve in different fleets, to allow different fleet mixtures in some scenarios.

### Example Organisation Chart



The criteria for promotion are:

- Operations completed. At least five operations in the current rank to qualify for promotion.
- Confirmed 'Kills'. A confirmed kill is one which another member of the friendly force witnessed and credits you with. In the event of competition for promotion, the officer with the best record will win.
- A favourable report from Commanding Officer as to your suitability for promotion.
- A gap in the command structure to accommodate you in the higher rank.

## Awards

Medals and awards are given in recognition of service and bravery etc.:

### SERVICE AWARDS:

Campaign Medals may be awarded at the end of a particular series of operations.

- **Long Service Award** for 15 Completed Missions, with clasps for each additional 15 missions.
- **Hazard Award** for completing 5 Pacifier missions without having lost your ship.
- **Good Conduct Award**; for completing 30 missions without a court martial or reprimand.

### BRAVERY ETC.:

- **Wound Badge**: Awarded to Pacifier Crew wounded in action.
- **Ace Recognition Clasp**. Awarded to official aces - that is any pilot with 5 confirmed kills. Confirmation must come from another pilot who was present at the engagement concerned and saw you making the kill. Kills can be shared in the event of combined efforts.
- **Silver Carrier Destruction Badge**: To All Crew involved in the successful destruction of an enemy Carrier.
- **Gold Carrier Destruction Badge**: To Pacifier Pilots who single-handedly destroy an enemy carrier.
- **Spacefleet Meritorious Conduct Medal**: Awarded to any crew who perform an act of special note whilst in battle.
- **Imperial Star**: For crew rescuing friendly forces or crew at the risk of their own lives, or any other act of outstanding daring and/or bravery. This is only awarded by the Emperor.

Obviously, medals and awards look very good on your record and when being considered for promotion..

### MISSION POINTS

As you gain experience as a space pilot, so you get better.

On the one hand you get better at playing Cruel Void, but also your character gains certain advantages.

These developments are by gaining Mission Points on the following scale:

Surviving a Mission	1 point
Surviving Mission and landing Pacifier back on Carrier	1 point
Gaining a new medal, not already awarded	1 point
Getting promoted	2 points
Each confirmed kill	2 points
At Game Control's discretion	±2 points per mission

You can gain the following by trading in Mission Points for a Personal Upgrade:

Personal Upgrade	Cost in Mission Points
Increase g-resistance by 1	<b>15</b>
Fast Recover from a wound	<b>5</b>
Good Luck (+1 to all dice for 1 mission)	<b>5</b>
One Extra Action point	<b>8 x current AP level</b>

## So, What Happens When You Die?

A good question. Well, its not good for your career, that's for certain.

Player characters that die are reduced to Petty Officer rank, lose all medals, awards, mission points and personal upgrades and start with a blank record.

If the scenario permits they may be given certain non-combat jobs, or really suicidal piloting jobs (such as commanding an unarmed troop transport) for a while as well, just to encourage you to avoid dying.

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## Courts Martial

The following Court Martial procedure is that used in the Imperial Spacefleet. Once again this provides the model for many world's discipline legislation.

No military structure can long remain effective without some form of internal discipline.

Most of the time this needs never be invoked, however, there are occasions when it does. We will be reflecting this.

When on active operations, the Commanding Admiral has the ultimate responsibility for discipline within the fleet. This authority is delegated as appropriate to subordinate Admirals and Captains. For our purposes the key means of enforcing discipline is the court martial.

Court Martial Offences include:

- Loss of the ship (for any reason).
- Disobedience.
- Cowardice in a life-endangering situation.
- Incompetence.
- Financial inpropriety.

(and others)

At the end of a Mission, based on an indictment from any other player and if all the Senior Officers present agree, an officer or officers may be placed under Open Arrest and court martialled for one or more of the above offences. A full transcript of the proceedings of the court is automatically recorded and transmitted to the Imperial SpaceFleet Headquarters in the event of an appeal against either finding or sentence. The senior Admiral may choose to hold over a court martial until operations are complete if desired.

The Summary Court Martial follows the following course (and must be completed quickly in the break between Missions):

The court is formed, comprising The Commanding Admiral (or a designated subordinate of flag rank), one other Admiral and a ship's captain of the fleet. The charges are read to the accused. The accused is then invited to explain his or herself (briefly). The court discusses (briefly), and sentence is passed.

### **Sentencing:**

The Empire has no death penalty.

In game terms, a player can be :

- a. demoted to a lower rank in the current ship.
- b. demoted to a lower rank in another (weaker) ship.
- c. removed from active duty and placed on the Admiral's staff.
- d. placed under close arrest in the brig for the duration (the player becomes an umpire for the rest of the game).
- e. Severely reprimanded (which is placed on his record and may count against promotion prospects)
- f. given a caution and let off.

In the case of an entire crew being indicted, their sentences can be:

- a. transferred to a weaker ship (and being replaced by the weaker ship's crew).
- b. split up between the fleet and replacing deserving staff officers, who will take their places.

The decision of the court is final, and appeals can only be heard after the whole game has finished.

## Political Background

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Here are some notes on the main political groupings:

### **Earther Empire**

Earth is now a relatively quiet and ancient world, revered still as the original home of humanity. Present day Earthers are few in numbers with only a handful of colony worlds under its control, having passed the baton of aggressive colonisation and reaching for the stars on to its now independent old colonies. Still reasonably strong, however, with steady and efficient crews and long traditions.

### **Martian Association of Free Colonies**

The modern Martians no longer live on the Mars of Sol, but New Mars, a better world and centre of a growing colonial empire. Old Mars is actually part of the Earther Empire now.

The Martians and the Earthers represent the Old Home System, the Martians in particular have a strong military tradition, many of them are to be found working as mercenaries in many armies and fleets in the Galaxy. They have a fierce pride and famous stubbornness in battle and are well regarded as in a fight. Martians tend to look down on anyone from a newer colony than theirs (i.e. everyone except Earthers and other Martians).

### **The Greater Federation of Asteel**

Known as the Esteelers: A young and thrusting Star Empire, with many worlds under its sway. The quality of its fighter personnel is excellent, having a large population to select from - potentially the most powerful of all human groupings, it has yet to put forth its greatest strength it seems. There seem to be many Venerian staff officers and Martian marines & pilots in Esteeler service - mainly because Esteel pays very well.

### **The Venerian Republic**

In general, the Venerians are relative newcomers on the interstellar political scene (their home planet Venerius only having become independent itself about a century ago), and as a result they are ambitious and highly politicised at all levels. They are renowned for their harsh military discipline in time of war - when just about every transgression from petty theft upwards is punishable by hanging. They are fiercely jealous of their standing as a major political force.