

STAR BORDERS

VOL. 1

::HUMANITY::



DESIGNER'S NOTES

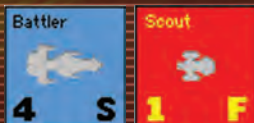
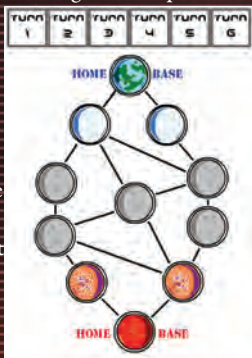
By Lance McMillan

Star Borders: Humanity began as a semi-serious challenge by Alan Emrich to create a game that would use only 16 counters. The game you now hold in your hands is the end result of some years' worth of development and refinement, including a second edition, of the initial design I submitted in response to that challenge.

From its inception, Star Borders wasn't intended to simulate the cataclysmic clash of starfaring races – rather, my goal was to capture the feel of the skirmishing and raids of a border dispute in some remote sector of a far-flung empire. Players fill the roles of out-of-favor Viceroy and forgotten Satraps, exiled to an obscure backwater of space where they aren't much of a threat to the existing order and can do as little harm as possible to the core worlds. Their resources are necessarily limited and the assets to prosecute a conflict or develop a quadrant scarcer still. Political forces outside of the player's control decree the beginning of each chapter (scenario starting situation) as well as its negotiated end. Consequently, thriving in this universe is a real challenge.

I wanted Star Borders to be easy to learn so that it could serve as a "gateway" game used to introduce new people to our hobby. I also wanted it to play quickly to help it appeal to the shorter attention spans of the Xbox Generation. To help me realize these goals, I relied heavily on the input and feedback of the members of the local high school games club that I moderate. I was fairly certain I had succeeded with my design when every week the kids would ask to play "that spaceship game" again.

The game's combat system is based very loosely on that used in John Edwards' venerable War at Sea, but without the tedious tracking of damage points because I felt the destructive power of futuristic weaponry would be such that even a single hit would obliterate all but the largest starships. I also opted for a point-to-point map rather than a hex grid (the very first iteration was hex-based; the second revision is pictured here) because I've found that new gamers tend to be a bit deterred by hexes, and the whole goal of this game was to appeal primarily to novices.



The concepts of Logistic Points (LPs) and the Development cards were suggested by Alan Emrich and, while I resisted these ideas at first, I'm now convinced that they are vital game and story elements adding greatly to the depth of the play experience, making it possible for this game to grow into a much grander series of related games. For this, his boundless enthusiasm, his endless patience, and the many other ideas and discussions we shared about this game, I'd like to extend my special thanks to Alan.

My sincere hope is that after learning the system and playing the included scenarios a few times, players will be comfortable enough with the game to invent their own scenarios. The game system was specifically designed to invite such creativity and 'home grown' rules, maps, and new starships. The intent is that players will mix and match this first Star Borders game with others upcoming in the series and find new and exciting ways to enjoy the whole of it.

Which is a great segue to get you to read about what is forthcoming in this series on the inside back cover. . .

DEVELOPER'S NOTES

By Alan Emrich

There were a lot of adventures along the way to bringing you the game you're holding. The story begins as told in Lance's Designer's Notes, but allow me to bring it up to date, describing how we brought you this glorious second edition of the game.

Let me start by saying that I love Star Borders; not just like it, but love it. It is absolutely 'my kind of game'. Easy, quick, fun as can be with cool decisions and enough theme to dip my mind into. But the real clincher for me was its flexibility – I can create my own scenarios or make them up together with my opponent and experiment around with crazy ideas (i.e., map arrangements, force compositions, victory conditions, etc.). It's a perfect game for me to play and a Design Your Own 'kit' all rolled into one, so I'm thrilled to be the developer for the Star Borders game series.

After the first edition of Star Borders: Humanity was published, Lance soldiered on and started cooking the next two factions (the insectoids and the cyborgs, a.k.a. the 'bugs' and 'bots'), around the playtest tables. That game, Star

Borders: Aliens, was ready to go and formatted for release to be a companion to the first edition of this game when everything suddenly changed...

The publisher, Victory Point Games, upgraded from desktop inkjet printing and a hand-press die cutter for the cards and counters, to a Canon superprinter, a card slitting machine, and a laser-cutter for the counters. Since Aliens was going to be made on this new equipment, a complete retrofit of the original Humanity game was required so the two products would properly mate. This gave us an opportunity to publish a new, second edition of Humanity, but that is not the one you hold in your hands today. We got that upgrade to this game completed and ready to go when everything suddenly changed again...

Now the publisher had taken their improved component quality and went a step further with boxed games in sleeve wrappings, mounted game maps, real dice, and distribution to game stores where we would be 'meeting' new customers and fighting for their attention on store shelves. Thus we had to take a fresh look at the entire Star Borders series and consider how to package and market it in its entirety to 'the masses.' This caused a lot of rethinking with several great ideas evolving from the solid plan we developed, and now you're seeing the first fruits with the second edition of this game.

We opted to use VPG's larger size box so that we could include mounted maps that were not puzzle-cut. The counter mix had grown (and the rules with them to cover the new features added to the series), but we were determined that this game, the first in the series, needed to retain its 'tutorial' value as an introduction to the Star Borders universe and a great game for teaching new players and letting them join the fun. So the four original scenarios got a slight redesign to gradually introduce new features, and new scenarios were created to really allow players to see what they can do with the components included with this game.

Now this, the segue game to a large and very fun Star Borders universe, is ready for you to teach to new players. Start with the classic First Frontier War scenario and have a great time! We took every advantage of the time that creating these component upgrades afforded us, with new cards, ships, faction mats, and so much more. While you're enjoying these little wars in the backwaters of space, know that we've got your back and that a greater galaxy of gaming is coming to supplement Humanity, and there's a lot more fun in store!



Table of Contents

[0.0] USING THESE RULES	1
[1.0] INTRODUCTION	1
[2.0] GAME EQUIPMENT	1
[3.0] SETTING UP THE GAME	3
[4.0] SEQUENCE OF PLAY	3
[5.0] THE ACTION PHASE	3
[6.0] MOVEMENT	4
[7.0] COMBAT	5
[8.0] HOUSEKEEPING	8
[9.0] COUNTDOWN	9
[10.0] HOW TO WIN	9
[11.0] SCENARIOS	10

[0.0] USING THESE RULES

New gaming terms, when they are initially defined, appear in dark red lettering for quick referencing.

The instructions for this game are organized into major “**Rules**” sections as shown in large CAPS font, and represented by the number to the left of the decimal point (e.g., Rule 4.0 is the fourth Rule). These Rules generally explain the game’s subject matter, its components, the procedures for play, the game’s core systems and mechanics, how to set it up, and how to win.

With each Rule, there can be “**Cases**” that further explain a Rule’s general concept or basic procedure. Cases might also restrict the application of a Rule by denoting exceptions to it. Cases (and **Subcases**) are extensions of a Rule shown in the way that they are numbered. For example, Rule 4.1 is the first Case of the fourth Rule; and Rule 4.1.2 is the second Subcase of the first Case of the fourth Rule.

References to examples of a Rule or Case are in shaded boxes like this.

Text in boxes like this provide the voice of the game’s designer, who is addressing you to explain an idea or concept that is not, itself, a Rule or a Case.

Important information is in bold text.

[1.0] INTRODUCTION

In *Star Borders: Humanity*, two factions: the Grand Imperium and the Free Alliance (hereafter referred to as the **Imperium** and the **Alliance**) are fighting to establish control of a contested (if not particularly important) ‘backwater’ region of the galaxy. Each player represents the commander of one faction’s forces and controls the pieces representing those forces. Unfortunately, each player’s position as a Governor / Viceroy / Satrap is tenuous in relation to their larger civilization, which is why you were assigned here, to the armpit of space and with scant resources, instead of to your glorious core worlds controlling the newest and best forces. In the grand scheme of things, you seek to build a good reputation and make the best of your near-exile to the Star Borders, so that you can leave by advancing your career and family name.

Star Borders is played on small, connected maps arranged during set up to represent a contested region of space. The map shows various habitable planetary systems and other spaces (collectively referred to as “**locations**”) connected by hyperspace transit lanes (called “**links**”). You use these **links** to move units between locations on the maps. Taken together, these linked spaces perform the same function as the squares on a checkerboard, regulating movement and showing the positions of the pieces.

GENERAL COURSE OF PLAY

One player controls the movement and combat of the **Alliance** (blue) spaceforce, while the other controls the movement and combat of the **Imperium** (red) spaceforce. Each player, in turn, moves and then engages in combat with their units in an attempt to capture (or prevent from being captured) key locations (e.g., planets) on the map. Finally, resources called **Logistics Points** (LPs) are gathered.

Players take complete turns until the ‘1’ Turn on the Countdown Track is completed or ‘sudden death’ ends the game sooner, at which point the winner is determined. Basically, the player who has the most undisrupted **Control** markers in play at the end wins.

[2.0] GAME EQUIPMENT

PARTS INVENTORY

- Two 8.5” x 8.5” **Neutral Sector** maps
- Four 8.5” x 5.5” **Home Sector** maps
- Two 8.5” x 5.5” Faction mats
- Two 8.5” x 5.5” Sequence of Play Aids
- Two 8.5” x 2.5” Play Aids (1 Turn Track, 1 Terrain Effects)
- 7 Humanity Scenarios
- 1 Bonus Humanity + Aliens Scenario
- 1 Sheet of double-sided counters*
- 12 Humanity Development cards
- 2 plastic Logistics Points tokens (1 Blue, 1 Red)
- Two 6-sided dice (1 Blue, 1 Red – boxed edition only)
- 1 Rules booklet

*Some slight soot and discoloration can occur during the laser cutting process.

If any of these pieces are missing or damaged, please email us at info@victorypointgames.com

[2.1] **The Map Sections:** Each map section, called a **sector**, represents a small area of galactic space. When you place one or more (rectangular) **home** sectors and/ or a (square) **neutral** sector together, they form a **quadrant** of space typically used to play the game (as illustrated here).



Notice that some home sectors and the neutral sectors are **geomorphic**, meaning you can arrange them in different configurations. Each scenario shows the layout of that game's quadrant.

Each player's **home sector planets** are color-coded in that side's color (blue for **Alliance**, red for **Imperium**) while the planets in the neutral sector are a neutral (brown) color. In each player's home sector, the large planet is usually (but not always) its **Sector Base** planet.

There is a boxed, numbered grid on each map that will be used in future expansions but is not used in *Star Borders: Humanity*.

Also included is the **Countdown Track** and other game aids.



[2.2] Faction Mats: Each player is the local military/political commander in charge of their civilization's interests in this unregarded frontier of space. Your side, or "**faction**", has its history outlined, special abilities explained, and resources managed on its individual Faction mat which is color coordinated with its pieces.



[2.3] Playing Pieces: In *Star Borders*, the square cardboard playing pieces (also called "counters" or "units") represent the **Spaceships** composing a player's spaceforce.

Each piece has a distinctive **Ship Type** ("Class") name and silhouette representing it. *If there is a background stripe*



behind that name, it only has a single step to lose before its destruction. A stripe in the faction's color indicates that the ship only has one step (total), a dark stripe indicates that the ship has multiple steps, but it is currently damaged and has only one step remaining.

Each ship unit also has data along its bottom showing its **Attack Rating** (basically, what number it has to roll, or less, on a die to hit a target), **Defense Rating** (checked when that ship is hit to determine the result of that Hit), and its **Engines** (the number of Engine symbols it has, indicating how many links it can move per Logistics Point spent to move it). If the engine symbol(s) are circled, then the ship has the special **Cloak** ability.

Along the side, some ships are also noted to have other special abilities. Along the left side, a small flag icon indicates that ship is a **Flagship**, and the bolted hexagon icon denotes it has the **Repair & Salvage** ability. Along the right side, a dark circle with a white number indicates that ship's **Planetary Assault** rating.



The double-sided round **Control markers** denote which player controls a planet, the planet's status of either being a **Sector Base** (denoted with a Flag icon) and/or **Fortified** (and to what level, as shown by a number of triangle icons) or **Disrupted** (as shown by the starburst icon). There is also a square **Game Turn** marker.

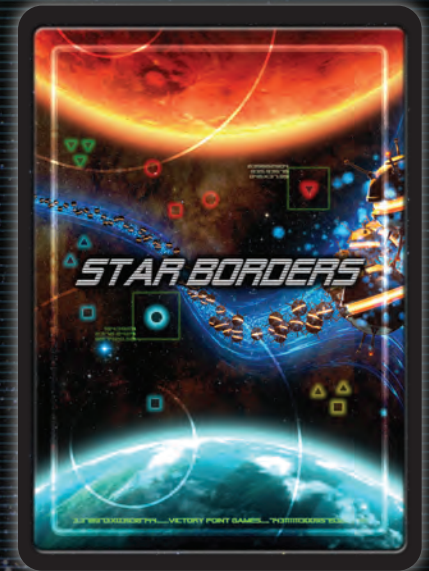
Note that the **Control** marker on a planet denotes its **ownership**. The printed color of the planet itself typically indicates control at the start of a game, but control can change during play.



"**Friendly**" units and markers are those in your Faction's color.

DEVELOPMENT CARDS

Development cards represent elements of the game's story (e.g., political, technological) that are unique to a given player / scenario and might be assigned during set up or drawn during play. The player possessing a particular card receives its benefit after revealing that card.



SCENARIOS

The double-sided mats show how to set up the scenario on the back and the history and scenario-specific special rules on the front.



[3.0] SETTING UP THE GAME

1. Choose a scenario and follow its specific set up instructions, arranging the quadrant as illustrated and placing the specified ships as listed. Planets marked with a Control marker begin with that Faction's **Control** marker, and those with Sector Base markers begin with that Faction's **Sector Base** marker there.

For your first game, we recommend that you start with Scenario A, it was designed to be an introductory scenario for this game.

2. If either or both players set up with a specific Development card (or cards), they are assigned and placed in each player's hand. Shuffle the remaining cards and place them, face down, in a Draw Pile within reach of both players. If either or both players set up with a random card, they are drawn.
3. Each player's unused markers, and ships that set up as "eliminated", are placed on the corresponding boxes of their Player Aid mat; this is positioned in front of the player and used to direct the war effort. Reinforcing ships might also be set up on the Countdown Track, as indicated in the scenario's instructions.

Each faction in the game comes with its own Special Abilities explained on its Faction mat. All players will want to familiarize themselves with these before starting play.

4. Place the **Game Turn** marker on the scenario-defined Countdown Track turn number, with the color side up of the Faction that goes first that turn.

After setting up the scenario and noting who the First Player is, play proceeds according to the Sequence of Play until its conclusion.



[4.0] SEQUENCE OF PLAY

Each Game Turn is divided into Player Turns, one for each player. The "*First Player*" is listed in the set up instructions.

1. **Pre-Launch Phase:** If the scenario requires a dice roll-off for initiative to determine the player order, do so now. *When the initiative changes, be sure to flip the Game Turn marker over as a reminder of who*

went first that turn. Note that this means a player could have consecutive Player Turns between Game Turns (by going last on the previous turn and first on the next one).

FIRST PLAYER TURN

2. **Action Phase:** Spend your LPs to accomplish your goals.
 - a) **Card Purchase Step:** You may buy up to 1 card.
 - b) **Activity Step:** You may move, repair or rebuild your ships and improve your Planetary Defenses.
3. **Combat Phase:** Battles occur between opposing ships; they are resolved at each contested location in whatever order you desire.
4. **Housekeeping Phase:** Perform these four Steps in order:
 - a) **Planetary Control Step:** You gain control of uncontrolled and unfortified planets where your ships are now located.
 - b) **Planetary Assault Step:** You can assault fortified planets.
 - c) **Gain Logistics Points Step:** You gain Logistics Points and add them to your LP Track on your Faction mat.
 - d) **Repair Disruption Step:** You can repair Disruption on planets you control.

SECOND PLAYER TURN

5. The Second Player performs Phases 2-4.
6. **Countdown Phase:** If required, **roll for a Sudden Death ending.** Otherwise, move the Game Turn marker one box to the right and begin a new Game Turn. When the game is over, check the Victory Conditions (10.0) to determine the winner.

[5.0] THE ACTION PHASE

During your Action Phase, you may spend Logistics Points (LPs) to possibly buy a Development card, move, repair, and/or replace lost ship units, and improve the defenses of your planets.

THE CARD PURCHASE STEP

[5.1] **Drawing a Card:** The **first** decision that you must make during your Action Phase, before any LPs are spent for other purposes, is whether or not to purchase a Development card. This is only allowed if you control (8.1) your **Sector Base** and it is unbesieged (but it *can* be disrupted, see 8.3).

PROCEDURE

The cost to draw a **Development** card is **half** of your current LPs (rounded down), but **always at least 2 LPs** (even after applying any "discounts" on purchases that you might be entitled to). If you purchase a card, take the top card from the draw pile, read in secret, and then add it to your card hand.

[5.1.1] **You do not need to reveal that card until the moment it is used. A card can be revealed at any time. Once revealed, a card remains revealed.**



[5.1.2] **The Card Rules Rule:** The instructions on a card supersede the Rules and always take precedence when there is a conflict between them.

[5.1.3] **No Sale:** If no **Development** cards remain in the Draw Pile, **do not reshuffle!** None may be drawn from that depleted pile for the remainder of that scenario.

Example: Cheyenne begins her Action Phase with 7 LPs. She decides to draw a card and spends 3 LPs to do so (half of 7, rounded down). She examines it and places it face down in front of her, waiting to spring it on her opponent when the moment is ripe. She then spends her remaining 4 LPs to manipulate her units and markers that turn.

THE ACTIVITY STEP

[5.2] **Replacing a Destroyed Ship:** You can replace eliminated ships (i.e., those in your Eliminated Units box) and return them to play. You *can* move newly replaced ships on their turn of arrival onto the map.

This represents asking that civilization's core worlds and central government to release ships from their strategic reserves to make up for your shameful losses suffered in this, the "critical sector" (at least "critical" in *your* opinion).

PROCEDURE

It costs **one (1) LP** to **request** replacements from your superiors for that Turn. (*This is just the "overhead" cost for your whining to your superiors that you can't make do with what you have.*)



The cost to actually replace a ship in your Eliminated Units box **after** the request cost is paid (above) is **one (1) LP per ship unit** (regardless of the number of steps it has – ships are always replaced at full-strength from their civilization’s “central reserve”).

Your **replacement ships may freely reenter play using either side (your choice) of that replaced unit** should both sides be different class, full-strength ships. Place newly replaced ships at your unbesieged, friendly **Sector Base** planet (i.e., one with that side’s distinctive +1 LP Control marker residing there).

Example continued: Cheyenne’s position is grim. Her losses are substantial, and enemy ships threaten her **Sector Base**. She decides to spend her last 4 LPs to replace lost ships.

She spends 1 LP just to make this request to her superiors (the cost of “complaining” to the government). With that “overhead” cost paid, she spends 1 LP to replace a destroyed **Starship**, another to replace a lost **Escort**, and the last to replace a destroyed **Auxiliary** as its improved **Guardship** version (by flipping it to that side).

[5.3] Repairing Damaged Ships: Multi-step ship units that are currently on their reduced-strength (“damaged”) side (shown by the dark stripe along their top when they are one step away from destruction) can be flipped back to their full-strength side.

PROCEDURE

The cost to repair a damaged ship is **one (1) LP per step**. Only damaged ships at (or moved to) undisrupted (8.1), unbesieged (8.3) **friendly-controlled planets** OR at the same location where there is no **enemy presence** (i.e., a ship or marker that is an opponent’s color) **and** a friendly ship with the **Repair & Salvage** symbol present, can be repaired.

- Stop: Repairing a ship is “movement,” and it **ends movement** for that Player Turn for both the repaired **and** repairing ships’ (see 6.1.6).



- Limit: Each available friendly planet, and each of your ships’ **Repair & Salvage** symbols (some have more than one), can repair a maximum of 1 step per turn. Your available **Sector Base** planet can repair an unlimited number of steps per turn.



Example: Cheyenne’s **Starship** escaped damaged from a Battle during her opponent’s turn. It is now her turn, and she wants it repaired. She spends 1 LP and uses its two Engines to move it two spaces to a **Deep Space** location where she has a ship with a **Repair & Salvage** icon. She pays another 1 LP to repair her **Starship** and flips it back over to show its full-strength side again. *Neither* her **Starship** nor the ship that repaired it can move further this turn.

[5.4] Improving Planetary Defenses: you may spend LPs to improve your controlled planets’ defenses, making them easier to defend and harder to conquer.

PROCEDURE

Each triangle printed on a **Control** marker denotes a level of **Fortification**. When first acquired, a planet receives a **Control** marker without any triangles on it (i.e., **unfortified**). Thereafter, its owner can increase its Fortification level by only **one** triangle per turn (maximum) at a cost of **1 LP + 1 LP per level of Fortification that planet is being raised to**; e.g., to go from 0 to 1 Fortification costs 2 LPs; to go from 1 to 2 Fortifications costs another 3 LPs (i.e., it’s a total investment of 5 LPs over two turns to build up to a level 2 Fortification); from 2 to 3 Fortifications costs an additional 4 LPs, etc.



Replace or flip the **Fortified Control** marker necessary to reflect that planet’s improved Fortification Level after building it up.

[5.4.1] Access: You can only improve your unbesieged (8.3) planets.

[5.4.2] Limitations: Your **Fortified Control** markers (a.k.a. **Fortification** markers) are assigned by the scenario set up instructions or, if not mentioned at all, you set up in the “Stock” box on your Faction mat the number included in the game’s counter mix. Each planet can have a maximum of **one Fortified Control** marker, and you *cannot* voluntarily eliminate your own **Fortified Control** markers once built.

A Faction cannot have more planets fortified than its allotment of **Fortified Control** markers allows: that is, in **Star Borders: Humanity**, two 1 (and 2) level markers plus one **Sector Base Fortress** marker for the **Imperium**, and three 1 (and 2) level markers plus one **Sector Base Fortress** marker for the **Alliance**.

These quantities represent Faction policies regarding how strongly the central government allows its distant Viceroy, like you, to fortify their positions, as this makes you potentially more difficult to get rid of. From your superiors’ perspective, it is bad policy to let you get too comfortable and entrenched in your local power base, as you could become a threat to them.

[5.5] Reinforcements: When the scenario instructions grant you Reinforcements, newly acquired ships are received at any time during your Activity Step of that turn without LP cost. They are placed at your Sector Base (regardless of its Disruption or the presence of enemy ships there). The loss of your last (or only) Sector Base delays the arrival of your Reinforcements until your next Activity Step when you have again established a Sector Base.

Note that the scenario’s instructions might specify alternate or additional entry locations for your Reinforcements (including your Eliminated Units box, which means they must be “Replaced” in the normal manner, see 5.2, before entering play); those instructions take precedence over this standard rule.

6.01 MOVEMENT

Movement is taking an individual ship and relocating it to a different place on the game map. If that ship has a **Flagship** symbol, other ships can accompany it at a lower movement cost each.

[6.1] Movement Limitations: Certain aspects restrict ship movement:

[6.1.1] Logistics: You must spend LPs to move ships, separately or in groups (paying for each ship), during your Activity Step each turn.

[6.1.2] Engines: For every LP spent to move a ship, it can transit a number of **locations** (e.g., a planet, asteroids, deep space, etc.) along connected links not exceeding its engine’s capabilities. Thus, you can only move a ship with a single engine symbol to an adjacent, connected location; a ship with **two** engine symbols can transit up to two such connected locations (i.e., move two spaces), **three** engines can move up to three spaces, etc. within the following restrictions:

[6.1.3] Obstructions: A ship must end its movement **for that turn** when it enters an Asteroids or Nebula location.



[6.1.4] **Enemy Presence:** A ship must stop its movement for that turn when it enters a location containing one or more ships and/or any type of *Control* marker belonging to an opponent.

Important Exception: Friendly ships can freely move through spaces occupied by enemy ships at *Deep Space* locations.

[6.1.5] **Cloaked Movement:**

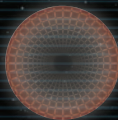
A ship with the **Cloaking** ability (shown by a circle around its engines) can, *once per turn only*, continue



moving after entering a location containing an enemy presence (an exception to 6.1.4) unless it is also an **Asteroids** or **Nebula** location (6.1.3), as these still end even a cloaked ship's movement for that turn.

[6.1.6] **Stop Repairs:** A ship that ends its movement due to entering an above location **cannot** make Repairs (5.3) there that turn, as Repairs are also "movement".

[6.2] **How to Move Ships:** A single "move" for a ship consists of spending 1 LP to then "use" that ship's allotment of engine symbols to move it, one location at a time up to the total number of its engines, from its current location to an adjacent location along a linked warpline.



If its current location is a *Wormhole*, it can move to any other *Wormhole* location in play. Think of every *Wormhole* as 'linked together' for movement purposes.

If its current location is a *Nebula*, that ship must pay one additional (+1) LP to exit that space. This is in addition to the cost to move that ship!

Movement Example: An Imperium *Raider* (with 2 Engines) spends 1 LP and moves from its present location along a link to an adjacent *Wormhole* (i.e., its first move using 1 of its 2 Engines). There are no enemy ships there to stop it, so then it moves from that location (using its second Engine) to another *Wormhole* elsewhere on the map (i.e., its second move). There is an enemy ship at the receiving *Wormhole* location, so that *Raider's* movement for the **entire turn** is over and no more LPs can be spent to move it again that turn.

Alternative Example: The same ship makes the same first move, but there are opposing ships at the first *Wormhole* location. Its movement must cease at that location for the turn (6.1.4), even though it still had its second Engine left unused.

[6.3] **Keep 'Em Moving:** You can move a single ship multiple times during a single turn. It can be moved repeatedly as long as the LP cost is paid each time it moves its Engine # of spaces (6.1.2) and it has not yet encountered a move-ending situation for that turn (see 5.3, 6.1.3 and 6.1.4).

[6.4] **That's Nowhere, Man:** Ships cannot move along links leading off the edge of the sector map (to nowhere).

[6.5] **It's My Turn:** Opponents' ships do not move during your Action Phase.



[6.6] **No Obligations:** Players are never obliged to move any ships during their Action Phase.

[6.7] **Group Movement:** You normally pay for and move ships individually, but you can also pay for and move them in groups, as long as no ship exceeds its individual engine speed (6.1.2) and 1 LP is spent per ship moved in that group (unless that group includes a **Flagship**, see below).

Flagships: When 1 LP is spent to move a **Flagship**, other friendly ships at its location (including other **Flagships**) can be included in a **group move** with it (i.e., moving together in a stack at the speed of the slowest ship in that group) at a cost of only 1/2 LP each, rounded down; (i.e., it can take 1 ship with it "for free"; 2 or 3 ships for a total of +1 LP, etc.) This is only a **movement cost** discount; the price to exit a *Nebula* location, for example, remains +1 LP per ship (6.2), even if a ship's movement cost was lowered by moving as a group with a **Flagship**.

These ships "Towed" by a **Flagship** share that **Flagship's** movement bonuses/penalties and must end their 1/2 LP's towed movement with that **Flagship**.

Example: Cheyenne's opponent, Jack, moves in for the kill. He has a group of four ships together (with different Engine values), including his **Flagship**, and pays 2 LPs to move the lot to an adjacent location (which is as fast as the **Flagship** can go) where three more of his ships await.

With his last 3 LPs, he leaves one of these seven ships behind and moves his **Flagship** once more, this time with five other ships in tow, into battle with Cheyenne's forces.

[6.8] **No Interruptions:** You must complete all friendly ship movement, replacements, repairs, etc., before your **Action Phase** is over and the **Combat Phase** begins. There's no going back once you start the next Phase or Step.

[6.9] **Stacking:** There is no limit to the number of ships, enemy or friendly, that can be at a single location.

[6.10] **Common Knowledge:** Players may freely examine all of the pieces on the map at any time.

7.01 COMBAT

Combat takes place as **Battles** between opposing ships and/or fortified *Control* markers at the same location.

A player currently taking their turn is called the **Attacker**. Their opponent at that Battle is called the **Defender** (regardless of the overall strategic situation on the map).

Battle Sequence: Conduct each Battle in a series of **Rounds**. Each Round follows this strict series of **Steps**:

0. Pre-Battle Fire (Attacker, then Defender); apply all Hits

BATTLE ROUND

1. Opponent's Hide (usually not allowed)/Retreat Option
2. Your Hide (if all your ships are cloaked)/Retreat Option
3. Victory Check; Post-Combat Salvage
4. Defender's ships may form Engagement Groups and Fire; Attacker applies Hits
5. Attacker's remaining (i.e., surviving) ships may form Engagement Groups and Fire; Defender applies Hits
6. Victory Check; Post-Combat Salvage

If either side consists **only** of a **Fortified Control** marker, only **Step 0** of the Battle Sequence (the Pre-Battle Fire Step; see 7.2) occurs. Afterward, that Battle immediately ends.

[7.1] **Terrain Effects on Combat:** Opposing forces located in a *Deep Space* location do not engage in Battle; they simply remain in place during the Combat Phase, ignoring each other.

Opposing forces located in a *Nebula* location:

- A) have their Battles end automatically after only one Round is fought;



- B) no Retreat is allowed by either side *before* that single Round of Battle; and
- C) any ship that is forced to flee that Battle must make a survival roll (7.6).

[7.2] Pre-Battle Fire Step: This Step represents surprise, “charging” to Battle, long-range or planetary preparatory missile attacks, etc. It occurs *only* before the **first** Round of Battle (i.e., it is skipped on the second and subsequent Rounds). When *both* sides have pieces capable of conducting Pre-Battle Fire (i.e., Missile Bases or pieces granted this ability by certain cards), the **Attacker** fires first (and the Defender applies any Hits), then the Defender fires (and the Attacker applies any Hits). *This is the opposite order that ships fire on each other during Battle Rounds.*

Missile Bases: At a Battle where you have a **Fortified Control** marker, you may attack with its “**Missile Bases**” during this Step. The number of **triangles** indicates:



- A) how many attack dice it rolls, and
- B) its Attack Rating (see 7.5 for the Firing Procedure). Missile Bases *cannot* combine with ships to form Engagement Groups (7.5.1).

Examples: A fortified planet **Control** marker with **one** triangle can fire **one** shot and Hits on a **■** or less; a fortified planet **Control** marker with **two** triangles can fire **two** shots and each Hits on a **■** or less, etc. *You can see that each time you raise the Fortification level at a planet, its defenses improve exponentially, not arithmetically.*

[7.3] The Fight or Flight Option: During your **Hide/Retreat Option** Step of the Battle Round Sequence, you must decide whether to hide, stand and fight, or retreat from that location.

[7.3.1] All or Nothing: When exercising this Option, all of your ships at the Battle location **must** stay and hide, fight, or retreat *together*. You cannot split them up; that is, during this Step, you could not choose to retreat with some ships and stand and fight with others.

[7.3.2] Hiding: During your **turn only**, on the first Battle Round only, if all of your ships have



the **Cloaking** ability, then you have the option to **hide**. That is, skip that entire Battle without fighting. These cloaked ships do not Retreat; they remain at that location. This is a one-time Option; once Battle commences, you cannot later hide your ships there using their Cloaking ability.

Important: Your opponent’s cloaked ships cannot hide during your turn and must engage in Battle normally.

[7.3.3] No Retreat: A player has no option to retreat, and his ships **must** stand and fight, under the following circumstances:

- That Battle is at a **Nebula** location.
- **On The First Round** of a Battle (only) during *your* turn, your ships cannot retreat and must either fight or hide (7.3.2).
- **On The First Round** of a Battle during your turn, your *opponent’s* ships cannot retreat and must fight **if any of them have only one engine symbol**.



Otherwise, your opponent’s ships’ **First Round** retreats (only; not individual ships fleeing as per 7.6), also called “**Retreat Before Combat**”, are restricted to a **Safe Refuge** location, which is one that must contain only a **Friendly Control** marker and/or ships friendly to the retreating side.

Penetrating through enemy lines with your cloaked ships is a good way to cut off enemy retreat routes!

[7.3.4] Conducting a Retreat: Ships **retreat** to an adjacent location along a link (only; this means that **ships cannot retreat through Wormholes**).

After The First Round Of A Battle (see the restrictions, above) during *your* turn, your ships can retreat *either* along any one link that they used to enter the Battle location **and** that has no enemy presence (6.1.4, even if a friendly ship or Control marker is also present there) **OR** to an adjacent **Safe Refuge** location (defined above).

Your opponent’s ships can retreat to any location that the Attacker’s ships did *not* enter the Battle location from **and** does not have an enemy presence (6.1.4).

- If no such qualifying retreat location

is available, a retreat cannot be performed and those ships must stand and fight until they either win or die.

- There is no LP cost for retreating; it is, in effect, a “free move”.

[7.4] Victory Check: The Battle ends if:

- A) one side consists only of **Fortified Control** markers;
- B) the Attacker decides to hide during the first Round (7.3.2);
- C) when only one (or neither, they might have all been destroyed or retreated) player’s ships remain at the Battle location; or
- D) automatically at the end of the first round of a Battle fought at a **Nebula** location.

If both players still have ships remaining at the Battle’s non-**Nebula** location, continue performing the next Step in the Battle Round Sequence (starting a new Round, at Step 1 in the Battle Round Sequence, if necessary) until that Battle finally ends.

[7.5] Firing Procedure: The Defender fires first and inflicts damage upon the Attacker’s forces, then the surviving Attacking forces return fire.

Normally, the Defender is the side whose turn it isn’t, unless the player whose turn it is has the **Sub-Meson Tracking Computers** card.

Forces fire during a Battle by rolling a die and comparing it to the firing ship or missile base’s (7.2) **Attack Rating**. If the die roll is less than or equal to its Attack Rating, it scores a **Hit**; if the die roll is greater than its Attack Rating, the result is a **Miss** and has no effect.

[7.5.1] Forming Engagement Groups: When it is a player’s Step to fire, their ships can *all* fire, either individually or combined into desired **Engagement Groups**. An Engagement Group consists of two (or more) ships firing together; when they do so, they **combine** their Attack Ratings into a single **Attack Strength** and **add one (+1)** to their total Attack Strength for each ship in that group, *excluding the first one*.

An Engagement Group receives this bonus to its combined Attack Strength as an important advantage for attacking simultaneously from multiple vectors.

Important: Engagement Groups (and modified ships) with a net Attack



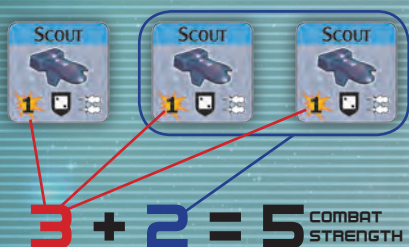
Strength of 6 or more automatically Hit (i.e., score an "Auto-Hit") when they fire!

Engagement Group Example: Three Alliance Scouts (each with a 1 Attack Rating) are preparing to fire, and their owner considers forming Engagement Groups.

They could all fire separately, rolling three dice, each hitting on only a 1.

Alternatively, the player could have one fire separately, hitting on a 1, and the other two combine into an Engagement Group that would roll a single die and Hit on a 1, 2, or 3.

Another way to work this is that they could all be put together into a single Engagement Group that would Hit on a 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5 (1 for each ship's own Attack Rating, +1 for each additional ship in the group, excluding the first one, for a multi-vector attack).



[7.5.2] 0- and Null- Strength Ships:

Ships with an Attack Rating of zero (0), can *only* fire as part of an Engagement Group (where they contribute nothing but the +1 for their attack vector). Ships with a null (∅) value or negative value Attack Rating cannot fire during a Battle Round under any circumstances, even as part of an Engagement Group.



Firing: Roll a single die for each ship or Engagement Group firing and determine how many result in Hits. Once the total number of Hits inflicted is determined, the **opponent** applies those Hits to their own ships as they desire.

[7.6] Applying Hits: A player who is applying Hits to their ships does so **one Hit at a time**. For each Hit, they designate one of their surviving ships at that Battle, roll one die (called the "shield" or "defense" roll), and apply the following result.

- If the result is *less than* the designated ship's Defense Rating, that ship's defenses have successfully negated that Hit (via shields, armor, and/or evasive maneuvers) and it is treated as a **Miss** (for no effect).

- If the result is *equal to* the designated ship's Defense Rating, that ship is in **danger**. It must immediately either:

A) Flee: this is like retreating (see 7.3.4), except only this ship retreats (and **not** that side's entire force at that location) and it can do so even on the First Round of Battle and without the First Round of Battle Retreat restrictions. When fleeing from a *Nebula* location roll for that ship's survival: on a 1, 2, or 3 it survives and on a 4, 5, or 6 it crashes and is eliminated while attempting to flee, OR

B) Take damage (see below) and, if it is still intact, it remains at that Battle.



Important: Ships that are unable to flee must take damage.

- If the result is *greater than* the designated ship's Defense Rating, that ship is **damaged**, which means it suffers one **step loss**. A single step loss flips a multi-step unit on its full-strength side to its reduced-strength side or eliminates a unit with only one step. Immediately remove eliminated units from the map and place them in their owner's Eliminated Units box (they can be replaced; see 5.2). Ships that are **not** eliminated after taking a step loss remain at that Battle and continue their participation at their newly reduced values.

Continuing with the above example, the *Scouts* combine into a single Engagement Group and get a Hit with their die roll of 3. The **Imperium** Player designates a full-strength *Destroyer* from among his ships in that Battle to receive the Hit and rolls against its Defense Rating of 4 to see the result. On a 1, 2, or 3 the Hit becomes a Miss. On a 4, the *Destroyer* is in danger and must either flee or take damage. On a 5 or 6 it must take damage, which means that it would be flipped to its reduced-strength side and stay at that Battle.

Every Hit must be applied (i.e., rolled for) against a target ship still at that location (i.e., one that has not yet fled or been destroyed at that Battle) until either:

1. Every Hit has been rolled for and the effects applied; OR
2. there are no target ships remaining at that location.

Timing: Timing matters when applying Hits, because a ship can be designated to receive Hits as long as it remains in Battle.

Example: 3 Hits are suffered and only a single ship with a Defense Rating of 3 is there to apply them to. The first shield roll is a 1, which is a Miss, so the target ship remains to receive the second Hit. A 2 is rolled to shield it against the second Hit, meaning the target ship is in **danger**; the owning player opts to have that target ship flee. Now, with no targets remaining in that location, the third Hit is not even applied.

[7.7] Victory Check: A Battle Round ends during a Victory Check Step when either side has Retreated or all of its ships have been eliminated and/or fled (i.e., when only one side's ships currently remain). The side remaining is the "Victor" at that Battle; the other side is the "Vanquished."

[7.8] Post-Combat Salvage: At the conclusion of each Battle, if the victor (only) has surviving ships at that location with a **Repair & Salvage** symbol, he may sift through the wreckage of destroyed enemy ships to glean vital intelligence.

PROCEDURE

Count the number of the vanquished player's **destroyed** (not merely damaged or fled) ships at that Battle (regardless of what exactly destroyed them), and then roll one die for **each** surviving victorious ship with a **Repair & Salvage** symbol.



- If *any* of those **salvage rolls** are **less than or equal to** the count of destroyed vanquished ships, then **one Intelligence Coup** takes place by the victorious player against the vanquished player. Only **one Intelligence Coup** can occur per Battle no matter how many successful salvage rolls are made.



- If every salvage roll is **greater than** the count, there is no effect.

INTELLIGENCE COUP

Achieving an Intelligence Coup allows that player to select one of the following effects on Development cards:

- No card: if, and only if, the vanquished player has *no* cards, you may examine the **Discard Pile** and take your choice of one card from there and **place it in your hand**, - OR -
- A **penalty** card: if there is a card in front of you causing you to suffer a penalty (i.e., it has a red circle with a lightning bolt through it), you may elect to discard *it* after any successful Intelligence Coup by you, thus ending its detrimental effect.

Alternatively, you can select one of the opposing player's cards and "**compromise**" it as follows:

- An **unrevealed** (i.e., unplayed) card: if chosen, this card is selected at random from your opponent's hand and compromised by simply discarding it, face up, into the discard pile.
- A revealed (e.g., an already played with an ongoing "for the rest of the game" effect) card, if selected, is compromised in one of two ways:
 - a) It can be discarded, thus immediately ending its effect, OR
 - b) If its card I.D. # is on a yellow sun, it can be placed, face up, between those players, indicating that they now **share** that ability (or can both perform its single use one time each) from that point on. Cards with their I.D. numbers on a ringed planet background cannot be shared! *Such cards can only be discarded when compromised.*

SHARED ABILITIES

A shared ability that is lost by one of the sharing players (e.g., by being discarded when compromised, the player's own decision to use it, its loss or expenditure as described on the card itself, etc.) is still retained by the other player(s) sharing it until they also lose it. If only one player remains with the use of that card, reposition it so that it is in front of that player only.

A shared card can, itself, be compromised again and either: discarded, shared by

yet another player, or **seized** by any one of its shared players (i.e., placed in front of that player for their exclusive use).

[8.0] HOUSEKEEPING

The sector of space the players are contesting represents only a small piece of the larger galaxy in conflict. Typically, the players are commanding one "front" of what are often much larger interstellar wars along their shared Star Border.

During the **Housekeeping** Phase, you gain control of planets, conduct Planetary Assaults, add Logistics Points to your Logistics Points track and repair your Disrupted planets.

[8.1] The Planetary Control Step: Planet

Control markers are placed at an unfortified enemy planet (only, see 5.4) when your ships are the only ones at that planet during your **Housekeeping** Phase. You **must**, at this time, place one of your unfortified **Control** markers there to symbolize your newly acquired control of that planet.



Important: Your Control marker is placed with its Disruption side showing, if you just fought and won a Battle there during your immediately preceding Combat Phase, OR if the Control marker that yours is replacing has its Disruption side showing; otherwise, it is placed with its normal side showing. Any additional Disruption markers on that planet remain there for you to clean up (these appear in future games)!

If you capture a **Planet** after fighting and winning a Battle over it during your turn, you have gained it in haste and left yourself a mess to clean up. If you wait to take control of it on a turn in which you did not fight a Battle at that **Planet**, you have deftly seized it without causing undue devastation and enjoy a smoother transition.

Note: Control markers are placed at planet locations only (and the **Sector Base Control** marker at that player's own Sector Base). You retain control (represented by your **Control** marker) until that marker is itself removed for any reason.



Deep Space locations cannot be controlled. **Asteroids**, **Wormholes** and **Nebulas** are only "controlled" while a friendly ship is present at that location and thus physically controlling it.

Effects of Control: While controlled, a planet location:

- can repair damaged ships (5.3)*,
- can have its defenses improved (5.4)*,
- stops enemy ship movement (6.1.4),
- prevents enemy retreats to that location (7.3.4),
- serves as a **safe refuge** location (7.3.3), if there is no enemy presence there,
- generates 1 Logistics Point per turn (8.4)*, and
- counts toward winning the game (10.0)*.

*But not if that planet is Besieged or Disrupted (see 8.3).

[8.2] The Planetary Assault Step:

Planetary Assault: After you have gained control of all of the unclaimed and unfortified enemy planets during your **Planetary Control Step** (the "easy pickings"; see 8.1), you may then proceed to conduct Planetary Assaults against **fortified** enemy planets where only your side's ships are located and at least one of your ships has a Planetary Assault Rating.



PROCEDURE

Total the Planetary Assault Ratings of all your ships at that location to obtain "the count", and roll a die.



If the die roll result is **less than or equal to** the count, reduce the enemy's Fortification Level on that planet by **one level** (flipping or exchanging that enemy **Fortified Control** marker there, so that it ends up with one fewer triangle on it). If a Level 1 **Fortified Control** marker is reduced to a regular (unfortified) **Control** marker, it is placed with its **Disruption** side showing.

If the die roll result is **greater than** the count, there is no effect.

[8.2.1] Assaulting an Enemy Sector Base: When conducting a Planetary Assault against a fortified enemy **Sector Base** planet, you must roll the die **twice** and use the **higher** (i.e., worse) of those two results.



Sector Governors (like you) tend to give their own local seat of government (i.e., their Sector Base Planet) the best defenses that they can arrange.

[8.2.2] Degradation: Just as fortifications can only be built up one level (triangle) per *friendly* Player Turn (5.4), so too can they only be *reduced* one level at a time per *enemy* Player Turn.

Example: The **Imperium** Player has one *Dominator* class and one *Specter* class ship at a location with an **Alliance**-controlled planet that has **one** Fortification level. This planet needs to be **assaulted** (8.2)!

The two ships have a combined Planetary Assault Rating of 5 (4 + 1). The **Imperium** Player rolls a die and the result is a 2, which just gets the job done. The **Alliance** Player replaces their *Control* marker so that it has one fewer triangle (i.e., it is unfortified and Disrupted in this case). This makes the planet ripe to fall to any **Imperium** ship *next* turn (8.1), its acquisition still in a Disrupted state.

If the die roll had been higher (i.e., a 3), the **Imperium** Player would have to consider assaulting that planet again next turn.



[8.3] Planetary Siege and Disruption: If enemy ships remain at a planet that you still control (i.e., your *Control* marker is there because it is not yet conquered by your enemy), that planet is considered **Besieged**.

While **Besieged** or suffering any **Disruption** (see 8.1), you **cannot** improve its Defenses (5.4) nor repair your damaged ships there (5.3). In addition, you do **not** control that planet for the purposes of receiving its **Logistics Point** (8.4) during play or its **Victory Point** when the game ends (10.0).



A Besieged or Disrupted planet *remains* a nuisance to the enemy. However, stopping enemy ships that enter its space (6.1.4) and preventing them from retreating to that location (7.3.4).

There is no additional effect if a planet is **both** Besieged and Disrupted.

[8.4] The Gain Logistics Points Step: Gaining Logistics Points: The basic economic unit of *Star Borders* is the **Logistics Point** (or “LP”). These represent the faction’s ability to draw (purchase) Development cards, move and rebuild eliminated ships, fortify planets, etc.

PROCEDURE

Reset the translucent plastic LP marker to the 0 space on its track (unused LPs cannot be saved between turns). Count the number of your own (i.e., *friendly*) undisrupted and unbesieged (8.3) *Control* markers on planet locations; add that to the number of *Asteroids* locations containing at least one of your ship units, then **add one (+1)** if you retain your own undisrupted and unbesieged *Sector Base*. That sum is the number of Logistics Points that you receive.

Example: The **Imperium** Player controls 6 planets (including his *Sector Base*) and 1 *Asteroids* location, providing a total of 8 LPs.

This LP income cannot exceed the maximum shown on your faction’s Logistics Points Track found on your Player Aid mat. Any excess LPs received are lost (i.e., *seized by higher levels of government or lost to corruption – perhaps your own!*).

Example continued: However, as per its LP Track, the **Imperium** has a capacity for only 6 LPs, so only 6 are received (i.e., a “full tank”).

[8.5] The Repair Disruption Step:

Removing Disruption: After receiving your LP income for the turn, you have the option to repair **Disruption** at planets you control (i.e., to flip them so their normal control side is showing) and thus end the effects of Disruption there (see 8.3). To repair Disruption (i.e., refit structures, quell unrest, cure disease, etc.) on your controlled planet, it must be unbesieged (again, see 8.3).



- If you have any friendly ships there with a **Repair & Salvage** symbol, each can remove one



Disruption from that planet automatically (i.e., “for free”).

- Otherwise, for each of your own Unbesieged *Sector Base* planets that you have (*typically only one*), you may spend 1 LP from your LP Track and repair 1 Disruption (but see 11.2).



Example: After receiving 8 income, the **Alliance** has one Disrupted Planet that wants for repair. With no **Repair & Salvage** ship at its location, the **Alliance** Player’s *Sector Base* Planet is Unbesieged, and so she spends 1 LP to repair that planet, flipping its *Control* marker over to indicate that it is now recovered. She will begin her next turn with only 7 LPs remaining on the **Alliance** LP Track.

[9.0] COUNTDOWN

During the **Countdown** Phase of each Game Turn (i.e., after all Player Turns have been completed for that Game Turn), the Game Turn marker is moved to the next lower-numbered box until doing so would move it off the ‘1’ box into the ‘0; Game Over’ zone, at which time the game automatically ends.



Sudden Death: When, at the **end** of a turn, the **Game Turn** marker is moved **out of** a box with a picture of a die in it, the First Player that turn rolls a die and, if the result is **less than or equal to** the die shown on the Countdown Track, the game ends immediately. If the die roll is **greater than** the die shown, play continues normally with another Game Turn.

[10.0] HOW TO WIN

Many scenarios determine the winner based upon an end-game score measured in **Victory Points** (VPs).

PROCEDURE

Victory Points: In most scenarios, at the conclusion of the game (see 9.0), each side scores 1 **Victory Point** (VP) per undisrupted and unbesieged *Control* marker it



has in play, and 1 VP per *Nebula* location having one or more of that player's ships there (this VP is earned by *all* players with ships at that *Nebula* location). The scenario's special instructions might also list other VP scoring methods or how to resolve ties.

Unless otherwise noted, the side with the most VPs at the game's end wins. A tied score results in a drawn game (but see 11.1).

[[11.0] SCENARIOS

The scenarios in *Star Borders: Humanity*, show the arrangement of the Sector maps for the contested quadrant, who is the first player, etc., including any special rules required to play that scenario.

FACTION ABILITIES

Each side or "**Faction**" receives its Player Aid mat when setting up a scenario. In addition to having that player's Logistics Points Track and holding boxes for its units and markers that can be brought into play on the map. These Faction mats also list the faction's special abilities that are employed in all scenarios.

[11.1] The Alliance: The blue Alliance Faction enjoys the advantages of a vibrant, independent civilization. Specifically:

1. Initiative: When rolling to see who goes first in any of the many scenarios requiring such initiative rolls, if the Alliance rolls a tie, then you choose whether you want to go first or not. *This is a profound ability that can greatly assist you at critical times.*
2. Harmony: Unless otherwise stated in a scenario's Special Rules, the Alliance wins when its score is tied at the end of a game. *Hey, you win tie games! This means that your opponents must always play to beat you.*

[11.2] The Imperium: The red Imperium Faction employs its ancient roots in military honor and practiced rule to offset the high costs of the Imperium government. Specifically:

1. Honor: When an Imperium-only spaceforce defeats an opponent's spaceforce in ship vs. ship Battle (either while attacking or defending) after there has been an exchange of fire (i.e., the opponent didn't just retreat before combat), you **gain one (+1) Honor Point** on your LP Track (up to 6, maximum; *it starts at 0 every scenario*). You can

spend each **Honor Point** as either **1 LP -OR- to force 1 re-roll** (by either side) in a Battle that includes at least one of your ships (and, yes, you can re-roll re-rolls, if you have enough **Honor Points** to do so). *Imperial leaders will do much for Honor in glorious space battles, and Honor has always done much for them!*

2. Establishment: Your own undisrupted and unbesieged **Sector Bases** can remove one planet's Disruption per turn as other players can, but at 0 LP cost (i.e., for "free"). *The Imperium is uniquely experienced at the quick and efficient establishment of order and rule on other worlds.*

CARD RETROFITTING

You may freely combine the twelve Development cards (#1-12) from *Star Borders: Humanity* with the cards from other games in the *Star Borders* series to form a larger, more varied draw pile when setting up any scenario.

GAME CREDITS

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And that's not all! The Star Borders Series is planned to consist of six different full-size packages of science-fiction "space empires" gaming goodness. Star Borders: Humanity is the first game, introducing the Imperium and Alliance factions to players, and new players to this series. You will be teaching this game to new players for years to come.

When you are ready for more, Star Borders: Aliens is the second stand-alone game and brings in two very different factions to the universe, the robotic C1B0R6s and insectoid Rhame. With all of its components able to mate with Humanity, you'll be designing your own scenarios in a jiffy.

But just to make sure, the third release is Star Borders: Us Versus Them, which is a super-charged expansion kit that provides another complete set of new components (with twice as many cards), but ties Humanity and Aliens together with new scenarios, adding multi-player play and introducing Carrier and Fighter class ships to each of the first four factions.

The fourth release is Star Borders: Xenos, where two more factions are included: the Ichthyos Pod and the Phyton Growth (a.k.a. the "Fish" and the "Plants"). This package also includes Superships for each of the now six factions in the game, multi-step terrors of space.

In the fifth element, Star Borders: Hostiles, special things are happening – hostile invaders in the guise of one or two nasty new factions are introduced, along with a Star Borders solitaire game system so that you can play each of the other factions trying to resist their all-out invasion. As an added bonus, there are new "space monsters" to fight, and scenarios provided to do exactly that.

The final planned release, Star Borders: Empires, is a multi-player "campaign game" in the best 4-X traditions of eXplore, eXpand, eXploit and eXterminate. Factions will build up and out toward the center of the map with tensions rising until, at last, "the incident" occurs and a general war breaks out. New features for economic development and political interplay are featured in this crowning work.

