

## **'First Clash' - A 'Power Projection: Escort' scenario by Neil McGurk**

### **Introduction**

#### *General*

During the first weeks of the 5th Frontier War (FFW) large numbers of paired Zhodani ships crossed the borders into the 3rd Imperium. Their main primary mission was intelligence gathering but a close second was the disruption of naval forces and their supplies. This is the encounter between one pair of Zhodani ships endeavouring to fulfil both mission objectives prior to returning to base.

#### *Imperial Briefing*

You have command of a small newly formed Task Force on its initial training mission. The aim of this mission is to bind the individual ships into an independent commerce raider unit for when the next Frontier War starts. To allow full independence to the task force you have been allocated a Tender/Tanker. You are currently practising formation manoeuvres in a quiet corner of the system.

#### *Zhodani Briefing*

Having carried out your allotted 24 hours of intelligence gathering, in this system, you were preparing to leave when an Imperial task force was spotted. The task force looks to be on a training mission and includes a Tender/Tanker. You have decided that as the War has started you will take this opportunity to strike at the Imperial naval forces and their supplies in the system.

### **Set-up**

#### *Imperial Forces*

The forces set-up within 12 MU of the centre of the playing area. The arrangement of the individual ships is at the discretion of the controlling player(s).

As the FFW has not officially started, all ships are not at "fighting quarters." To bring a ship up to "fighting quarters" roll a D6 at the start of the turn. If the result is equal or under the turn number the ship may fire as normal. If the roll is greater than the turn number, no offensive weapon systems may be used but defensive systems may be used.

No ship may have an initial velocity greater than 3 MU/turn.

#### *Zhodani Forces*

Having seen the Imperial set-up the Zhodani forces can be placed at any point around the Imperial forces but no closer than 30 MU. No Zhodani ship may have an initial velocity greater than 6 MU/turn.

## Forces

### *Imperial*

3 x Chrysanthemum Class Destroyer Escort (DE)  
3 x Fer-De-Lance Class Destroyer Escort (DE)  
1 x PF Sloan Class Fleet Escort (FE)  
1 x Knight Class Tender/Tanker (TT) (use the Zhodani Chtierabl Class Tender/Tanker TT)

### *Zhodani*

1 x Zhdiak Class Light Destroyer (DL)  
1 x Midu Agashaam Class Destroyer (DD) (\*)

*(\*) Dom's comments - This is an Imperial ship (26 points) being used in place of a Zhodani one. You could try substituting a Vlezhdatl Class Pocket Strike Cruiser (slightly weaker at 20 points) or 2 Plokl Escorts (slightly stronger at 28 points and a nasty missile load out) if you don't want to use an Imperial ship for the Zhodani. If you do, let us know how it goes, because we haven't. I think that the Plokl's will tip this toward the Zhodani quite heavily.*

## Victory Conditions

### *Imperial Victory*

a) Major Victory - Both Zhodani ships destroyed with no Imperial ships destroyed.  
b) Minor Victory - Both Zhodani ships destroyed with no more than 2 Imperial ships destroyed not including the Tender/Tanker.

*Draw* Tender/Tanker badly damaged (over half hull boxes checked), at least 2 other Imperial ship destroyed and 1 Zhodani ship destroyed.

### *Zhodani Victory*

a) Minor Victory - Imperial Tender/Tanker badly damaged (over half hull boxes checked) and at least 1 Zhodani ship escapes.  
b) Major Victory - Imperial Tender/Tanker destroyed, 1 other Imperial ship destroyed and both Zhodani ships escape.

**Designers Notes:** This scenario runs best with a referee and the victory conditions unknown to the Imperial player. If the Imperial player is aware of the victory conditions his force should be reduced by one Chrysanthemum Class Destroyer Escort and one Fer-De-Lance Class Destroyer Escort. The “fighting quarters” aspect of the Imperial forces is to encourage the Zhodani to attack sooner rather than later and the Imperials to make difficult decisions about splitting forces, committing them piecemeal or running away. Defensive systems are meson screens, nuclear dampers and sandcasters. Laser batteries used in an anti-missile role do not count.