

ADVANCED LEADERSHIP RULES

Ok, so this started out as an article about using the Campaign crew skills, but it sort of spread out to all sorts of other things too. It's not my fault, it just happened that way.

When we were designing Battlefleet Gothic we came up with loads of neat ideas for crew skills and ship refits which we didn't want to put in the basic game for fear of over-complicating it (theres an old games design adage which runs along the lines of "Any fool can make a game more complicated"). In the end most of these went into the section on campaign games at the back of the book. However, now that you all know how to play the game and understand all its intricacies and idiosyncracies we thought it'd be fun to open up the crew skills and ship refits for use in one-off games.

Using crew skills in one-off games

Having all those crew skills in the back of the book only available for campaign games is a bit frustrating. If you have a hankering to try out crew skills in one-off games use this alternate 'veterans' table when rolling for Leadership at the start of the game. Note that if one player is using this table then the other must too! All crew skills are rolled randomly using the table on p157 of the Gothic rulebook.

D6 Result

1. Untried crew(Ld 6)
2. Experienced crew (Ld 7)
3. Highly Experienced crew (Ld 8)
4. Veteran officers and crew (Ld 8 + one crew skill)
5. Crack officers and crew (Ld 9 + one crew skill)
6. Elite vessel (Ld 9 + two crew skills)

The Other method...

Another way of handling crew skills is to allow players to roll on the normal Leadership table and then 'trade in' Ld points to acquire crew skills. This keeps in line with the way that the campaign rules work and prevents ships generaaly having a good leadership **and** lots of crew skills. Each point you lower the ships Ld by gives it one crew skill, but ships may not reduce their Ld below 7 in order to gain crew skills.

Chinese Whispers

Each time the static over the comm cleared another salvo struck and the ship shuddered violently, flames roared nearby and men screamed as they were struck by debris or gouts of fire. Lieutenant Kortan struggled to make out the Flag lieutenants voice through the uproarsssssssss-tains dead-sssssss-pare to sssssss-engage-ssssss-ssssssss-power-to-auxiliary-thrusters-sssssssss ready t-ssssss-onfirm.

“Confirmed, rerouting power to auxiliary thrusters!” Kortan bellowed into the mouthpiece before turning back to the mayhem and shouting orders to the surviving crewmen and milling servitors.

On the shattered bridge flag lieutenant Anshar ducked under a fallen gantry to get back to the remaining operational opticon screen, the smell of blood and smoke clawing at his nostrils. At least engineering would be cutting the power to the thrusters by now so that they could burn retros and manoeuvre out of the gun line....

One of the best suggestions I had for BFG after the rules had been published in White Dwarf was that failed command checks should cause the ship to roll the order dice to find out what the crew had decided the captain must have meant! To keep this splendid piece of quirkiness in the game the following rule applies;

If a ship makes a command check to go onto special orders and fails the roll by six or more, the command has gone so horribly awry that an entirely different course of action is undertaken by the confused crew! Roll the order dice to determine what special orders are used, if the dice comes up with the special order originally requested reroll the dice (players with a great respect for the quirks of fate may allow the roll to stand instead).

For example, the ordinarily well-led (Ld8) Lunar class cruiser Caligula is in a great deal of trouble, it has suffered a bridge smashed critical and has blastmarkers in contact for a total of -4 to its Leadership, bringing it down to 4. The Caligula attempts to use all ahead full special orders to get away at the start of its turn but fails disastrously by rolling a 10! The order dice is rolled to see what orders are instituted by the debacle, lets hope its not burn retros...

Ship Refits

The ship refits from the campaign section are an interesting way of varying one-off games in a similar vein to crew skills. You can use ship refits by increasing the points cost of ships by 10% per refit, with a maximum of two refits allowed. The player refitting their ship is allowed to choose which table to use (out of weapons, ship and engines) but the actual refit must be rolled randomly.

Experimental Ships

If you really, really want to use a specific ship refit add 25% to the cost of the ship and choose one refit from the tables.

NEW SHIP UPGRADES

Ork Traktor Fields/0 pts

Any Ork capital ship can be upgraded to have traktor fields for free. The traktor field increases chances of an Ork vessel being able to strike an enemy with a boarding or ramming attack by drawing the two vessels together. However the field cannot be deactivated during the course of a battle (it takes a very long time to power up or power back down again) and it makes the ship an easy target for ordnance and nova cannon rounds as they ride the carrier beams to the target. Asteroid fields can be a bit scary too...

The traktor field is represented by mounting the Ork cruiser ship on a battleship sized base instead of the normal cruiser/escort-sized base. As noted above the pro's and cons of having a bigger base balance out so a Traktor field costs no additional points.

Power Ram/+5 pts

A power ram is an upgrade to the mostly decorative ramming spars or figureheads which form part of the prow of many warships. The power ram itself is basically a gigantic phase field or plasma arc generator mounted within the prow of the ship. At close range the raging energies unleashed will gouge a sizeable chunk out of an capital vessel or effortlessly smash apart an escort ship.

If a ship with a power ram successfully rams another vessel it automatically causes one point of damage, roll dice as normal to see if any other damage is inflicted. A power ram upgrade is available to Chaos and Imperial ships but may not be chosen for ships with prow mount weapons, lances or novacannon or the Emperor class battleship.

Designers Note on Ramming:

On the subject of ramming I should clarify that the ramming ship completes its full move whether it hits its target or not. This avoids battleships being brought to a halt by hitting an escort and, for the velocities and momentums involved, prevents anything too outrageous happening - most rams are going to be pretty much 'glancing' hits which do a few points of damage.

As to targets, All Ahead Full orders (necessary to attempt a ram) mean you must move in a straight line, and you have to make base contact to ram, so effectively you have a ramming 'corridor' of your base width out as far as you speed +AAF roll. One (and only one) ship with its base in the corridor may be rammed.