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Table of Contents

Editor's Corner.....	2
Trek Tech 101: Hyper-strings And Their Structure.....	2
Gossip!.....	5
Synthesis: A Risky Enterprise.....	7
Star Trek: New Voyages.....	9
A Look Back: The History of The PADD.....	12
Simming Tips: The Chain of Command.....	14
Trek Tech 102: Advanced Ablative Armor.....	16
Credits.....	19

Editor's Corner

What a great issue we have this time around. I'm sure you'll enjoy it.

Today, as it turns out, I am resigning from my two posts in the USF. It was nearly eight years ago that I found out about the USF. If I remember right, a friend of mine who had just joined the USS Darmok brought into school a printout of a sim's chat log. I was intrigued, so I joined the USS Excelsior as Ensign Pe'er Arronax, a Vulcan science officer who developed emotions and multiple personalities. Eight promotions and a lot of logs and mission briefs later, I'm entering the retirement wing of the host asylum.

On Saturday I served for the last time as the USS Odyssey's first officer, a post I've held for the last few years. I've had a lot of fun with the crew there, but it's time for me to reclaim my Saturday nights. Tonight I will be stepping down from the USF High Command. I hope to continue working on The PADD, however, and at least for the near future I'll still be your man to come to when the website goes down.

Ok, enough about me.

Just as a reminder, we have a **new subscription system** for all of the USF's publications. For more information, visit www.Sector001.com and click the link to [Subscribe to Publications](#). If you're not subscribed to all of them, you should be! Check them out.

- Commodore Pe'er Arronax
- Editor-in-Chief, USF PADD



Trek Tech 101: Hyper-strings And Their Structure

FIRST LIEUTENANT SAURAK
CHIEF ENGINEERING OFFICER, USS AGAMEMNON

Hyper-strings are everywhere and are attached to everything. You can find a hyper-string connected to the largest sun and the smallest insect. Hyper-strings are connected to dark matter and are affected heavily by energy sources.

Who precisely discovered hyper-strings is not really known. It is widely believed that the Laihe were the first species to discover them because they are the forerunners in hyper-string theory as well as research, unfortunately the Laihe speak in such a way that they are quite difficult to understand. The Delphine species happen to have a natural affinity for 'sensing' the strings as well as their structure. It is because of this that they make ex-

cellent navigators because they can constantly feel where they are in relation to hyper-string structures.

Without over-simplifying, hyper-strings are hyper-dimensional, non-physical structures of which the matter and energy of the physical universe are more or less ‘strung’ like beads. They aren’t anything like the common strings that are widely known about, the ‘strands’ of dense ‘cold’ matter that drift around in space; but the name was so appropriate it stuck.

Though hyper-strings do not exist in the physical multi-verse they are heavily affected by the energy and matter of the physical multi-verse. Hyper-strings come into play heavily in navigation because of this. Hyper-strings in the near future will be used as the basis of all navigational data because they are unmoving and will stay the same even through stellar drift. Each planet’s ‘string’ will stay the same, the structure around the planet and on it will change slightly because every thing has one and little things change constantly. However starship based hyper-string scanners are unable to detect strings connected to anything smaller than a runabout so it won’t affect a navigational system.

Hyper-string navigation systems will not be perfected until more research is done on hyper-strings themselves. To properly study hyper-strings you must be in a relatively empty area of space. It is quite difficult to study them at the quantum level because the more strings (objects and matter) there are the harder it is to make accurate readings of them and their properties. This is due to the fact that hyper-strings ‘vibrate’ back and forth in time similar to that of a cello or violin’s strings. This ‘vibration’ creates a lot ‘noise’ causing things like:

- Harmonic interference

- Dissonances

- Wave and partial wave cancellation

- Chaotic sines

Picture a great musical work being played by a full orchestra; it sounds beautiful put together but you can not pick out just one instrument, you can’t hear just the violin and are therefore unable to understand its meaning. The same holds true with hyper-strings. In areas with high concentrations of energy and matter all the sensors will pick up is a ‘buzz’; nothing will come through clearly. But interference from energy and matter itself is not the real problem because both are required for hyper-strings to exist. For the properties and uses of hyper-strings to be fully explored more ‘clean’ hyper-string research must be completed.

Studying hyper-strings and hyper-string structures does require specialized equipment, such as standard sensor palette type fourteen with a direct link to the main deflector dish and links to five to ten class twelve imaging arrays. In addition extended sensor palette type eight with direct links to the astrometrics systems as well as eight to twelve class ten imaging arrays are required. This equipment needed has been standard issue on the Galaxy,

Nova, and Intrepid-class starships and has been added to the repertoire of many other vessels within the Federation during the past four years scheduled refits.

Hyper-string research has turned up several things relating to the use and meaning of certain strings. It is possible to detect congruencies that may lead to universal dislocation (a.k.a. entering a congruent/parallel universe). While studying hyper-strings if the strings are being 'bent' closer together (They are no longer vibrating and are in close proximity to each other) this would indicate a congruence which could cause a dislocation. These congruencies can occur naturally or artificially and during such congruencies it is recommended that you not use the transporter as it is possible you may transport along the proper string but to the wrong congruent universe. Natural causes for hyper-string congruencies include but are not limited to ion storms (force nine or higher), verteron node phenomena, and inverse subspace field anomalies. There are no known successful ways (in this universe anyway) to artificially create hyper-string congruencies.

Information Should You Become Universally Dislocated:

If dislocated with a transporter, your only hope is to recreate the exact same transport which should return you to your own universe using a rubber-band effect with the hyper-string 'fragments' which are attached to you. If you are unable to attempt this solution and remain in the congruent universe for too long, the exact figure will be indeterminable, so you may become 'included' into the congruent universe, meaning all string 'fragments' will sever and new hyper-strings will form. If this happens you will be unable to use a transporter to 'rubber-band' home and will have to secure alternate means of returning home, more then likely by creating hyper-string congruencies and beaming through them. Or you can await rescue by a ship from your universe which would allow you to use it's strings to 'rubber-band' you back.

If your ship is dislocated with all hands, first repair any damage done to the ship during dislocation, if there is none proceed to next step. Next invert your structural integrity field (SIF) and set your shields for a flat nutation. Then you will need to invert the field supply generators and run power backwards through the switchback out-phase generator. Once you have achieved this you should be 'rubber-banded' back to your 'home' universe.

If an enemy should manage to dislocate (include) itself into your universe there are ways to relocate (exclude) it. First you will need to pump an additional nine-hundred terra-watts into the SIF then use a slingshot maneuver around a star of sufficient mass (10^{18} metric tons or greater). This will 'bend' hyper-string structures and 'rubber-band' the ship back to its 'home' universe. If your vessel has enough left over power (another three-hundred terra-watts) during the slingshot, use the deflector dish to create a phase-inverting tachyon beam and target it at the star. This will cause further 'bending' and alter Hyper-string structure enough to make it more difficult to dislocate from one's universe.

Intentionally Dislocating for the Purpose of a Rescue:

First find the hyper-strings that have ‘bent’ together, then you may either transport people through the string by re-configuring the angular confinement beam for maximum effect, or dislocating your ship.

While dislocating your ship is harder, it is probably safer in the long run as you can more easily dislocate and relocate it. Intentional dislocation requires five-hundred terra watts of power and an additional four-hundred above that for the SIF. First the deflector dish must be reconfigured to emit an inverse polaron beam then you must lower the shields and positively charge the hull using the shield emitters. After that target the beam into the center of the ‘bent’ strings and fire, this should create a small tear that your ship may travel through. While transversing the ‘tear’ your sensors will be temporarily blinded and everything may seem to dim. If your ship has a cloaking device activate it before entering the tear. After you have completed your rescue follow the step in the previous section on relocating (exclusion).

This data has been added from the ‘Starfleet Advanced Survival Manual’ which is currently available to only high-ranking officers.

The uses and benefits of hyper-strings seem quite limitless. After further study is done it is postulated that it will be possible to use hyper-string vibrations to study matter itself and not only that but possibly predict changes in it such as, rotational shifts in planets or super-novas in stars. Perhaps one day it will be possible to use them to peer into the future as well now that Commander Hwii of the Delphine Science Authority has proven the theory of retro-temporal oscillation. In conclusion, most hyper-string uses seem eons off, but breakthroughs are being made every day in the field with ‘clean’ hyper-string studies.



Gossip!

LIEUTENANT J.G. PIQUA BU
ASSISTANT ENGINEER, USS RODDENBERRY

This is your column for listing what you want to say about you and your fellow crew members. The only rules are: keep it clean and nice! I would love to list promotions, also, so be sure to send those congratulatory notes in to me. If you want your sim mentioned next time, just send me a blurb! Email LTPiquaBu@aol.com.

Indy. On the Independence, Katy McGuire was promoted to Lieutenant Junior Grade. Congratulations, Katy! You certainly deserved that promotion! Also, Lieutenant Commander Dion Xi-



ayoen has been dating Lieutenant Dana Tsai (from engineering). May I saw that they certainly do make a cute couple.

Tem. On the Potemkin, a certain Specialist by the name of Leigh Stone is out for Man-flesh. She is caught in the grips of the phase. Is there any man willing to help this poor woman out? She advertises herself as being 34 years old with brown hair and green eyes, and is widowed. If you are interested, call 1-800-THE-PHASE.



Speaking of Potemkin romance, there appears to be something blooming between Arin and Counselor Melody Dear. They are often seen in each other's company, and Arin's fire lizard has a definite preference for Melody's company as well.



Ares. We wish to extend our congratulations to David Rareer, who is now Captain and Commanding Officer of the USS Ares. Good luck on being the dude in command!

Aggie. On the Agamemnon, there appears to be a showdown between our favorite Aggie Vulcans, First Lieutenant Saurak and Lieutenant Junior Grade Voltak. In addition, it seems that Fleet Captain Synth has some new-found abilities with children, displayed during his dealing with a child-like alien. Where will this lead, I wonder!? And what of the amazing skill Lieutenant Junior Grade Jessica Knight has with the helm! She could give Troi lessons. And shall we discuss Lieutenant Doctor Zarabeth Carzidem's fascination with the bottle? We almost hesitate to mention that Zara seems to be drinking more and more. She is always heading to a bar. What is happening here? Should we be concerned?



Speaking of Lieutenant Zara Carzidem (the CMO who happens to be a Risan), she has split up with Lieutenant Bretani Tor (the CSO who is a Deltan). Is this good news or bad news, I am wondering?

Also, speaking of the Aggie, that ship has a new First Officer. Patricia Lovat has been promoted to the rank of commander here.

Also, good news! Commander Lovat is reuniting with her husband, Lieutenant Jerrid Billings of Starbase Everest. Congratulations to this couple who are getting back together! We hope it will last, and if it doesn't, we hope you don't kill each other.

TRIVIA!!!! The First Gatorade dumping ever for a promotion was received by Ensign Ellen Green during her transition to Lt. J.G. courtesy of Ensign Jay, on August 20th, 1996.



Synthesis: A Risky Enterprise

BY FLEET CAPTAIN ALEXANDER SYNTH
COMMANDING OFFICER, USS AGAMEMNON

Welcome to the first installment of my new Trek opinion column for The USF PADD, Synthesis. I hope that this column can become a regular part of the PADD in the issues to come. I should warn you, the reader, that my articles are likely to contain spoilers for Trek episodes and movies that you may not have seen yet. Therefore, consider yourself warned.

I should start by describing what my opinions about Trek in general are at this point. First, Deep Space Nine was my favorite of all the Trek series thus far. I believe it was far superior to the other shows, with the best plots and writing, best characters and characterization, and the most engaging story arcs this side of Babylon 5. Second, I thought both The Original Series and The Next Generation were good shows and highly admirable, but ultimately they could have gone much farther into their writing. Third, I believed that Voyager had a few good moments, but most of the show's years on the air yielded pure tripe. Fourth, I actually liked what I saw of The Animated Series, and believed it to be a fairly smart show for children.

That brings us to Enterprise. Poor, abused, confused Enterprise. In its three years of existence, this show has really been all over the radar. The first two years were spent with mostly standalone episodes, meeting Vulcans, Andorians, Suliban, Klingons, and people from the far future. The third season was occupied with a large story arc, where the lone human starship had to deal with the Xindi in the dangerous Expanse.

This heavy Xindi story arc has been quite a departure for the producers. Honestly, I didn't think they had it in them. In the past, they appeared to prefer story arcs that were only touched upon two or three times a season, such as the temporal cold war or the continuing conflict between the Vulcans and the Andorians. But the third season was different. The presence or heavy influence of the Xindi could truly be felt in each and every episode from start to finish. There were genuine character arcs that stretched across multiple episodes, such as Trip's grief over the loss of his sister and T'Pol's experimentation with drugs and emotions. Antagonists like Degra and Gralik could be sympathized with and were not the one-note bad guys that Enterprise had in its previous years.



With that, I now present to you my top five episodes of Enterprise season three, and why I thought they were so great.

5. “Proving Ground”

StarTrek.com Synopsis: “An Andorian ship led by Commander Shran arrives in the Delphic Expanse to help Enterprise home in on the Xindi superweapon.”

Why It’s Good: One of the best things Enterprise has done on the whole has been bringing the Andorians back to the screen. Jeffrey Combs plays Shran as good as, if not better than, he played Weyoun on DS9. This episode provided many humorous moments, such as the mention of the “Andorian Mining Consortium” and “archerite.” While the plot twist was somewhat predictable, the ending was intriguing in that we really don’t know who helped Enterprise. This makes for good television, when everything isn’t neatly wrapped up at the end and the audience is left demanding more.

4. “Twilight”

StarTrek.com Synopsis: “A spatial distortion leaves Archer unable to form any new long-term memories. Years in the future, he wakes up one morning and is stunned to learn the outcome of the human-Xindi conflict.”

Why It’s Good: The bad news about this episode is that the writers ripped off many, many previous Trek works in order to compose parts of this episode. The good news is that the audience largely didn’t care. The writing and direction were so superb that it left me wondering if I was still watching Enterprise. Up until this point in the third season, I really had my doubts about the continued survival of this show. However, “Twilight” restored my faith in Trek on the whole, that perhaps there would still be some good to be seen. This episode also made me believe for the first time that an Archer/T’Pol relationship could work, given the right circumstances.

3. “Damage”

StarTrek.com Synopsis: “While dissension among Xindi ranks festers, Enterprise tries to recover from a devastating attack.”

Why It’s Good: “Damage” portrays the realistic, dark side of our heroes, showing how desperate the crew can get. When the circumstances become so dire that the only way to survive is to betray their own values, can they do it? In short, yes, they can and do. It’s not pretty, and it’s not exactly the idyllic Trek that we’re used to, but it works. Begrudgingly, we can’t deny that Archer made the right decision. This episode was almost DS9-like in its darkness, showing the depth and dimension of these characters in a way we haven’t seen in Trek for years.

2. “Similitude”

StarTrek.com Synopsis: “When Trip suffers a catastrophic injury, his only hope for survival is a transplant from a ‘mimetic simbiot’ which Phlox grows from one of his exotic creatures.”

Why It’s Good: Simply put, this episode is classic Trek at its best. It takes on a contemporary controversy — in this case, the morality of cloning — and puts it into a Trek setting, showing various sides of the issue. In fact, the episode is more than just classic Trek; it’s classic science fiction. The audience is made to care about the character of Sim, Trip’s clone. We’re actually left wondering if Sim might survive and replace Trip. Perhaps the only negative point of this episode was the fact that Sim didn’t replace Trip, leading to something of a “reset button” ending, a trademark of Voyager and previously Enterprise.

1. “Stratagem”

StarTrek.com Synopsis: “Archer finds himself face-to-face with Degra, the designer of the Xindi superweapon, and tries to trick him into revealing its location.”

Why It’s Good: In my mind, this episode is so good, I really don’t want to spoil the plot or the ending. Let’s just say this episode has plot twists, doesn’t rely on special effects or gratuitous sex or fight scenes, and ends up being the most entertaining episode of the season. If you don’t believe me, go watch it for yourself.

So, was the third season a success or a failure for Enterprise? Everyone is going to have a different answer to this question. For me, it was a success. The producers took a significant risk with the show, and I think it worked out in the end. One would hope that a good response to the third season would encourage the producers to continue taking risks with the show to make it better, instead of going the safe route and just tossing countless scenes chock full of gratuitous sex and violence at the audience. (We already have Andromeda to do that.) Good stories require so much more. And, with the third season, Enterprise proved that it is capable of telling good stories.



Star Trek: New Voyages

BY COMMODORE PE'ER ARRONAX

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

There was the familiar banter between Spock and McCoy, the awkward way Kirk . . . spoke, the now-cliche themes. It had all of the signature marks of an original series episode, except it wasn't. It was episode one of Star Trek's never-made *fourth* season,

with actors appearing in their twenties standing in for Bill Shatner, Leonard Nimoy, and DeForest Kelly. The script was new, the sets were new, the people were new, but it was really just as good as the classics.

Star Trek: New Voyages (<http://www.5yearmission.com>) is an attempt to create a new Trek miniseries based on TOS — without the help of Paramount. Its blast into the past is surrounded in irony, with the episodes being shot digitally and distributed only on the Internet — techniques not even fathomable when the Enterprise first left spacedock.



Episode one, “Come What May,” the only episode finished so far, is a thirty-minute-long tale of a mysterious woman’s appearance on the Enterprise. No surprise to seasoned Trek viewers, the woman turns out to have some special powers, including the ability to induce hallucinations in the people around her. The usual cast of characters works to understand the woman and her connection with an attack on a fellow Starfleet vessel, and although the ending is quite predictable, I won’t ruin it for you here.

Most often a predictable ending is a sign of an oversimple plot, where the script writers underestimated what it took to make a captivating episode. That wasn’t the case here. New Voyages’ writers resisted the urge to throw in the temporal anomalies, complicated inter-stellar dynamics, and technobabble that Trek fans of today expect. Instead, they kept with the ’60s style of TV script-writing: teach a simple lesson through a simple plot. And, it worked.

Had the writers and costume designers not worked in a slight sense of humor over the episode’s anachronisms, it might truly have felt misplaced in time. Wardrobe, including for the female officers, was consistent with the past, shall we say. But the episode’s designers put a lot of thought into Kirk’s hair: his bangs cantilever out a good few inches in front of his face. And in a flash-forward, the writers had the young stars reenact some of the classic moments of the original series movies (Spock’s death



scene in the warp core from ST:II, which was flash-backed in ST:III, gets an encore in “Come What May.”). When you see the flash-forward, and the final credits for that matter, you’ll know the writers were going for a chuckle.

Not everything was strictly from the past. Notably, the exterior shots of the Enterprise were computer generated (with modern equipment). It’s obvious a lot of time was spent putting together the space sequences to look just like what TOS sequences could have looked like if Pentium 4’s were available forty years ago.

Out of the entire episode, there is only one thing I can say was a mistake. For a brief moment, the writers lapsed from their good judgment in sticking with the classic style by having the mysterious woman mention the Breen, the Cardassians, and the Dominion as examples of future threats to the Federation. The reference to The Next Generation (those species hadn’t been invented yet in the time of TOS) was unnecessary and out of place.

But that lapse hardly detracted from the amazing work of New Voyages’ cast and crew. The acting was fantastic — maybe better than the original. On top of acting well, something already a lot to expect of such a young cast, they maintained some of the quirky



gestures of the original characters and didn’t get bogged down in their amateur-level Scotty and Chekhov accents. The sets and editing were also impressive, especially considering the budget for the episode came out of the pockets of the producers.

I have high hopes for the second episode, whose trailer is posted on the project’s website. It and the episodes that may follow will show how far new technology can take an old idea.

(Thanks to the New Voyages website for the photos above . . . who I didn’t ask for permission because I don’t think they’d mind.)



A Look Back: The History of The PADD

BY LIEUTENANT J.G. KATY MCGUIRE
SCIENCE OFFICER, USS INDEPENDENCE

This summer The PADD returned from a long hiatus. It has an updated look and a new staff, but it has a history, too, that most are unfamiliar with. I connected with a few of the past editors of this eight-year-old publication to get a feel for how The PADD began and where it's come.

Today, and since 1996, The PADD has been a publication of the United Space Federation by simmers and for simmers. But it started possibly a year earlier in a far corner of the galaxy. Captain Eric Praethen (CO/USS Excelsior) explained, "The PADD actually began on the USS Stealth (then the only other sim in the USF besides the Excelsior). An officer there created a ship publication called the PADD."

Praethen would know. Known as Vice Admiral Jonathan Anders at the time, Praethen became the editor of The PADD around when The PADD became a fleet-wide publication.

This issue's Gossip section traces its history far back in the PADD's evolution. Does anyone remember this?

Fleet Captains Rigel and Gorkon are the masters in the art of flirting. Don't try to compete . . . however, classes are available for those wishing to get better. ;)

Many things have changed since then. (For one, Rigel is now a Commodore and a member of the USF's High Command.) The PADD is now published in PDF format, but that wasn't the case initially.

"[The PADD] was made in a Write file and even included a 'chirping' sound when you double clicked the Star Trek icon inside the file (very cool in those days)," Praethen recalled.

Projects such as this often evolve into a bigger-than-life production and it seems that The PADD was no exception. It became so huge that a committee of PADD workers decided to divide it and the USF LogBook was born, then under the leadership of Captain Ariell Johannson and with the help of now-rear-admiral Ahrele Johannson.

Praethen handed over The PADD to Fleet Captain Eileen Shodan in 1997, but thanks to The PADD's gossip column, he wasn't done with being an editor and another

PADD spin-off was formed. “ ‘The Dirt’ - our gossip column, helped inspire me to create the USF Weekly, another publication that has lasted for many years,” Praethen said.

And where did the Top Ten come from? It was originally in The PADD as well. Here’s part of a Top Ten from one issue:

Here are the Top Ten things keeping Rick Berman up late at night.

- ...
4. *Nervous tic when comparing Patrick Stewart’s salary to own*
 3. *His invisible Pakled friend Bertie*
 2. *Nagging feeling that heavy workload is hampering his singing career*
 1. *Due to poorly-negotiated contract, must work Wednesdays and Fridays as night watchman at studio lot . . .*

Praethen went on to say that he still handled formatting and publishing while Shodan was chief. It was he that was the mysterious “USF PADD” screen name. In addition, Praethen created the first PADD website. (Now archived at <http://web.archive.org/web/19990222064853/members.aol.com/usfpadd>)

Shodan now goes by the name Lieutenant Piqua Bu on the USS Roddenberry. She recalled, “At the time, I was merely one of the editors (I am good with grammar and spelling, so that role fit me nicely). Later, [Anders] quit the USF, and I became the main editor person for it.”

Under Shodan, The PADD was truly a monthly publication. There were 20 issues produced in the 26 months from November 1997 to December 1999 under her leadership. Six more issues were put out in 2000 and 2001.

The shift from Anders to Shodan and the two changes in editor that have since followed might have something to do with the effort it takes to put out a regular publication.

“It was literally like having a part time job!” Bu said. “I devoted, on average, about 20 hours a week to it (sometimes more when I was getting it finalized for publication, going over and over articles to see if I missed any errors).”

Praethen echoed, “It took a great deal of work, that much I can remember. Everything from formatting to editing.”

After Shodan came Fleet Captain Quixar L’ment as the editor-in-chief of three issues in 2002. Quixar was then the captain of the USS Columbia and is now retired. “I tried to create a publication that was geared more towards the craft of simming and how we could enhance it. The previous articles had their place in the organization, but I wanted to take the magazine in a direction I could be passionate about,” Quixar said.

Quixar recalled his most interesting stories. “Before the change to simming based articles, I did do an interview with an actual Star Trek author on an upcoming book. That

was cool,” he said. “After the changeover, I’d say the one on the Drallin was my favorite because it was a species that I had spent 5 years creating.”

“Ultimately, I ran out of steam. I had people willing to help, but as is often the case, the editor has to spearhead it himself,” Quixar said.

This summer, Commodore Pe’er Arronax took over The PADD.

Except for Quixar’s temporary shift in the theme of The PADD, the publication has had similar types of articles since its inception. “The PADD contained articles about almost anything,” Bu said, “as long as it was connected either with the USF, Star Trek, or science fiction. We had articles on Star Trek books and computer games, Star Trek trivia, sci-fi convention listings, technobabble articles . . . serious stuff, not serious stuff, and anything in between.”

One of the “serious” articles from The PADD’s past is “Tactical Tips To Keep You Alive” by Lieutenant Commander Wil Shade, chief tactical officer of the USS Potemkin. He gave information on “slicing the pie technique” and warnings such as “Crowding the cover limits your field of view” and “In an armed confrontation, you need to have the ability to move at an instant.”

Asked what he liked best about the publication, Praethen said, “It let me stay involved with officers at all levels of the fleet in many different sims. I’d chat with ensigns and lieutenants that I normally would not have known.” That was the best of The PADD’s past. I can hardly wait to see what the future holds for The PADD; how about you?



Simming Tips: The Chain of Command

BY COMMANDER LANNA D'AERTHE
EXECUTIVE OFFICER, USS LOTHLORIEN

It is important that all simmers are aware of the Chain of Command (CoC) and its function and purpose in regard to the sim.

The Chain of Command provides the control and communications necessary for crew members to accomplish the mission the crew is presented with each week. Each rank/level in the CoC is responsible for a lower level and accountable to all higher levels. This CoC provides a clear structure for orders to flow from the highest levels of the ship’s crew — the Captain and Executive Officer — to the most junior simmer, the ensign. Besides orders, the CoC allows information and ideas to flow upwards from the most junior person on the ship to the hosting staff.

Additionally, complaints regarding rules of the sim or crewmembers must also follow the chain of command. Keep in mind that making a formal complaint against a fellow crew member is not something to be done lightly. If it turns out that your complaint is false, frivolous and/or malicious, you may well end up being the one disciplined. However, if you truly feel that you have been wronged by someone you sim with and/or it's clear sim rules aren't being followed, be aware that the complaint must go through the sim's chain of command when trying to resolve the conflict:

- If the complaint involves you and another officer, first try to work things out with that officer, one on one. If it's clear that you and the individual cannot solve the problem alone, approach the next person on the CoC — your department head.
- If you have any documentation supporting your side of the issue, such as e-mail or sim logs, you should provide them to your department head at the time you make your formal complaint. Your department head will then speak with the other officer's department head (provided you are in different departments) and the four (or three) of you would try to resolve things. (Note, the DH for bridge officers such as Helm and Ops is the Executive Officer.)
- If the problem is still unresolved, the next step would be to approach your XO and CO. In most cases, the CO and XO will be able to resolve the situation. However, if you feel that the matter remains unresolved and it is important to you, you may contact your sim's Fleet Representative and ask him or her to look into the matter.

The CoC listed above is for simming conflicts only (such as a crew member taking up duties in your department where they don't belong, if a crew member ignores your contribution to the sim, etc). However, if you're having personal difficulties with a crew member that go beyond the sim, go straight to your hosting staff with the issue. Doing so will eliminate the inclusion of unnecessary people and the Hosts are likely better equipped to handle the situation.

If the difficulties lie with the hosting staff, approach your Fleet Rep. Fleet Reps are responsible for hearing all complaints from crew members that are not resolved satisfactorily by the Host team. If there is any alleged wrongdoing of a CO or XO to any crew members of his/her sim — including but not limited to ignoring complaints made by crew members to their command structure, punishing officers for expressing opinions on the state of the ship and its officers, dismissing an officer from the ship without just cause for doing so, or threatening a crew member outside of the sim — it is the Fleet Rep's duty to investigate.

Keep in mind that you can ask any higher ranking officer, including those not in your direct sim or USF CoC, for advice in dealing with a situation without making a formal complaint. However, also know that involving other simmers purely for the purpose of escalating the conflict — rather than solving it — is completely unacceptable, inappropriate, and will not go unpunished.

Following the chain of command not only helps you; it helps keep everyone who needs to be informed about what is going on in and with the sim so that the whole process can run smoothly and be more fun for everyone. It also provides stability and an effective way to resolve problems within the sim to each party's best interest.

For more information, see the USF Sim Guide, a tool available on www.Sector001.com for all USF simmers to benefit from. If you have any questions regarding the Chain of Command, the USF Sim Guide, or just the sim in general, please feel free to approach any Host in the USF — they'll be happy to answer any questions you may have.



Trek Tech 102: Advanced Ablative Armor

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In this issue we are going to go into a bit more detail about Ablative Armor, more specifically the Ablative Armor Generator. Last issue we discussed the possible applications for the Armor, this issue we give more detailed explanation of what exactly it can and does do and how the Generator can be installed.

Ablative armor is an additional reactive plating imposing a counterforce to incoming weapons fire, thereby dissipating its energy. As in the case with the Defiant, which was built with the armor in place, the Defiant was able to remain in tact and functioning even after a Dominion attack. It was hoped at the time the Armor was added to the hull of the Defiant that it would protect the ship from Borg attack. Thankfully it protected them against the Dominion first.

The Ablative Armor, while proving to be strong in withstanding even the most vigorous of attacks was not enough for some of the ships that were placed in harms way. As the previous article has stated, ablative armor does not make a ship completely impervious. As shown below, The USS Valiant was destroyed despite its armored hull. As you can see, the impacts were well placed and the Valiant was lost almost immediately. Peace be with the souls on board.



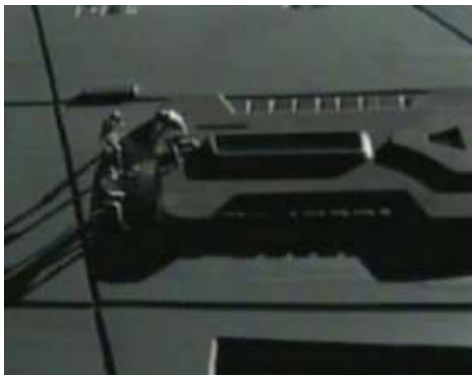
The Ablative Armor Generator, given to the USS Voyager by a future Admiral Janeway, proved to be invaluable to the Voyager in its return voyage home through the Delta Quadrant. Once the system was installed and the Generator powered up, it helped save the crew and

the ship from a multiple Borg Vessel attack. As you can see, though Starfleet weapons have proven ineffective in most cases against the Borg, the Armor held fast and thanks be, we have the Armor and Voyager.

To install the Ablative Armor Generator requires up to six hull walkers wearing environment suits with zero gravity technology. The six people should divide and conquer this task. First the generating devices must be placed in strategic spots along the hull; the engineering crew should instruct the group of installers to place the generators on the shield array, where the generators will best be able to perform their function.



When the generators are in place and the crew members are safely inside, it is recommended that a test run be undertaken. This is performed by the engineering staff on the bridge via their console station. Initially the Armor will need to be slightly adjusted, again the engineering crew should undertake this task. When all lights are green and the computer shows a 100% covered of the hull it can be assumed that the vessel has now gained 48.3% shield boost. Some of you may be thinking that 48.3% is not that much. However think of it this way. Say you have an egg. The shell of the egg is its shield. Normally it would take a hard crack on the edge of a bowl to break it open. Now say that egg has a 48.3% shield (shell) boost. You hit the edge of the bowl and nothing happens, the egg remains whole. You drop the egg, again it remains whole. Where as before a drop from any height would have insured complete destruction, the shield boost saved it from an early demise and now you are from eating replicator rations.



One of the most useful advances of this armor is its ability to materialize and dematerialize over the hull of the vessel it is installed on. In the last issue we spoke of the possibility of armor being installed on a shuttle craft. With the generator it has become possible, though there is only one known shuttle craft that uses this technology. As shown here on

the Shuttle craft, the armor is advancing over the hull to protect it from enemy fire. This also allows the craft to enter particularly rough atmospheres with minimal to no damage, which in turn saves the crew from any injury and any supplies they may have aboard. With the Ablative Armor Generator installed on the shuttle craft, it has a greater percentage of survival when going up against a vessel with superior weapon power. At this time it is not known if visibility is effected when the armor is covering the entirety of the hull.

With the ability to cover the entire hull, even weapons arrays can be covered when not in use. This gives the vessel a distinct advantage because its weapons are not in danger of becoming a targeted system. With standard armor permanent apertures are left for such equipment to be used, leaving the vessel vulnerable to attack via their weapons arrays. In the event that the weapons are needed, the Ablative Armor can be deactivated briefly over them to allow the shot or shots to be taken, then activated once more making them near impervious. This is one of the more impressive technological advances this armor has. In the past, vessels were left vulnerable to attack on their weapons systems because of the inability to remove shielding over just the weapon ports. This gave the attacking vessel the perfect time to disable or destroy the weapons system entirely.



According to sources Starfleet had little time to assess and research the technology further. However, with the ease it was adapted by Voyager and the shuttle craft without the need for a space dock or outside assistance, indicates to the engineers of Starfleet that it should be relatively easy to adapt all of the Fleet's ships with this technology. This in turn will, on a whole, give greater strength to the entire Starfleet armada. To the right is a photo of what a vessel, specifically an Intrepid Class Starship, will look like with the Ablative Armor at maximum integrity.



We will be eagerly awaiting Starfleet research and development on the Ablative Armor Generators. We will report back with updates as they become available.



Credits

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