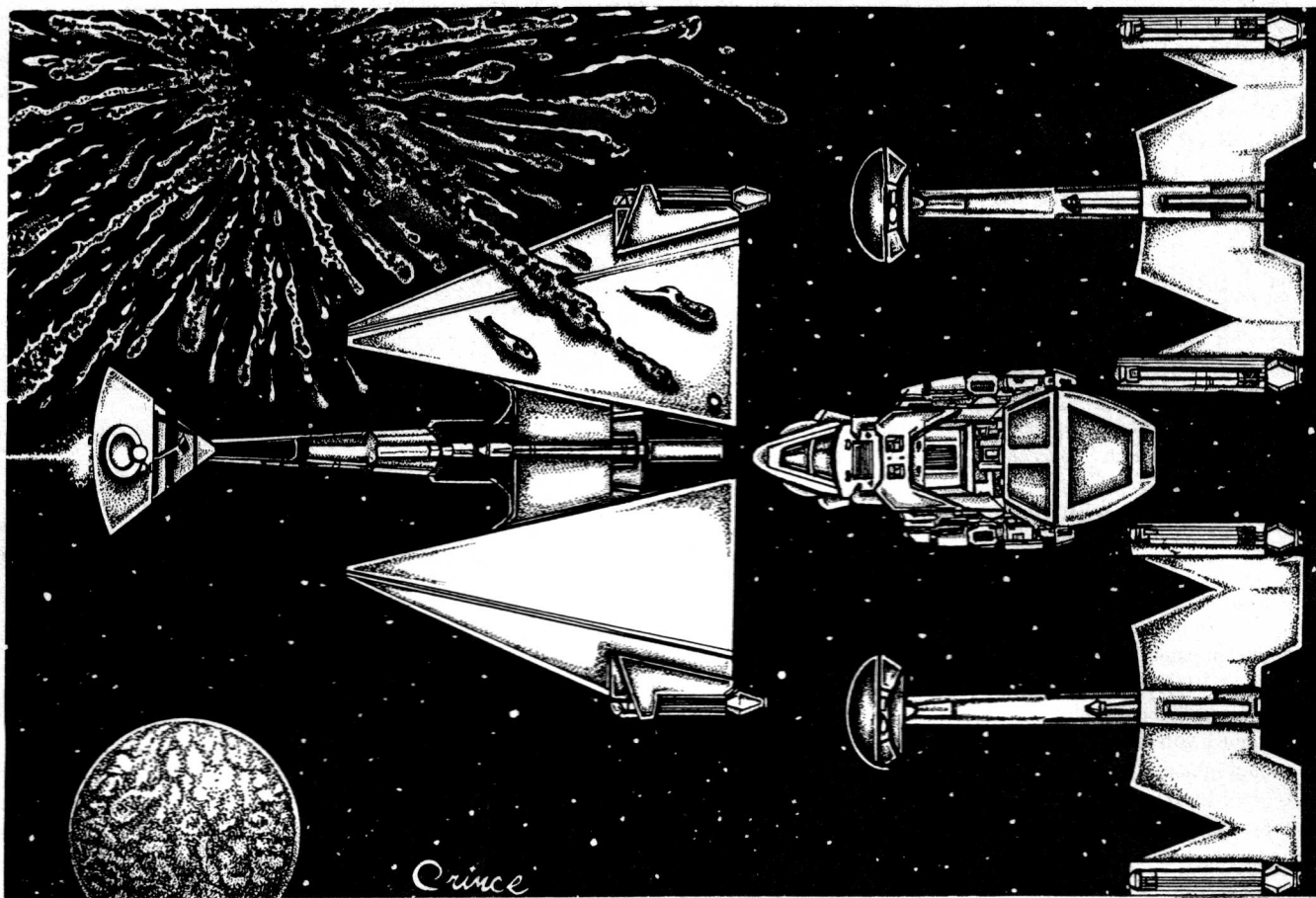




# TACTICS OF THE IMPERIAL KLINGON NAVY

Bill Van Horn

This material is a translation and compilation of the various Imperial Klingon Navy training texts that have been captured during the course of many border clashes between forces of the Empire and the UFP. Material contained herein can be considered current up to Reference Stardate 2/2206. Any errors in translation are the responsibility of the author.

This article is being published in the hope that it will give Star Fleet officers some insight into Klingon tactics. It is important that we understand our enemies, so that we do not underestimate them. It is hoped that this information will also be of some assistance to those who act as the aggressor forces in training situations. Please keep in mind that these are not firmly established doctrines, but are simply the contents of various training publications. Conditions may vary from Sector to Sector.

All Klingon tactical publications break fleet operations down into four main levels: Single Ship Operations; Squadron Operations; Battle Group Operations; and War Operations. Before studying Klingon tactics, it is necessary to have a working understanding of the differences between these types of operations. "Basic Naval Units," a Klingon cadet training publication written by Captain Kizanti zantai-

Pillon, offers the best descriptions of these groups. It is quoted at length below.

**SINGLE SHIP OPERATIONS:** Simply what the name implies. A single ship is often sent out to explore a new section of space. This often occurs when the commander of the ship in question is considered a threat by someone high up in the Klingon power structure. This can also refer to an unescorted raid (like the famous Genesis Raid) or an important courier mission. The only hard, fast rule is that only one ship is involved.

**SQUADRON OPERATIONS:** This refers to a mission undertaken by a Squadron. In Klingon naval jargon a Squadron is a group of three ships (five if the ships in question are gunboats or escorts) that operates as a unit. It is usually commanded by a Captain who holds the title "Squadron Leader." This concept is examined in depth later.

**BATTLE GROUP OPERATIONS:** A Battle Group is a group of Squadrons placed under a unified command, usually that of an Admiral. The minimum of Squadrons necessary to make up a Battle

Group is two, and the maximum is three. This a Battle Group can contain from six to nine ships (ten to fifteen in the case of gunboats or escorts).

**WAR OPERATIONS:** This is the most rare Klingon formation. It is a massing of Battle Groups (there is no upper limit) under the command of either three Admirals or two Thought Admirals. This massing is only used during a declared interstellar war, and has not been seen since the Four Years' War.

### SINGLE SHIP OPERATIONS

Single ship operations are quite common in the Imperial Navy, but not as common as they are in Star Fleet. In most cases a cruiser (the famous D-7 class is a favorite, although the D-20 is also popular on the Romulan border) or a frigate (the L-9 is a popular choice) is detached from an existing Squadron and sent out on a raid. The flagship almost NEVER is detached in this case. These ships are often declared privateers in an effort to remove any ties to the Empire. This sort of single ship raiding is more common on the Romulan-Klingon border than it is on the Federation borders, due mainly to the Organian Treaty and the fact that the Klingons can usually hire Orion pirates to do their dirty work near the Federation.

A second type of single ship operation has become more common since the Klingon-Romulan Technological Exchange of Stardate 2/0902, which gave the Klingons the cloaking device. Since that time the Klingons have been sending small scout-type ships into UFP space on an assortment of missions. This sort of operation, for obvious reasons, is not covered in any of the Klingon manuals captured at this time, but it is safe to assume that such missions are espionage-oriented.

A final, almost traditional single ship mission is that of the scout ship. Like their Federation counterparts, Klingon scout and survey ships often venture deep into unknown space alone. These are considered high-risk missions, and the rate of returning ships versus outgoing ships is low.

There are no established tactical doctrines for single ship operations. In his definitive work "The Mailed Fist: Warfare in Space," Thought Admiral Kostantin epetai-Kolor states that "...individual ship actions must be left to the skill of the Captain involved...It is this one's opinion that raiding missions can and should be used to screen Captains, so that the skilled may continue and the scum be eliminated." This statement shows that the Klingon High Command considers such operations to be tests of a Captain's skill. As such it is safe to say that they will always be part of the Imperial Navy.

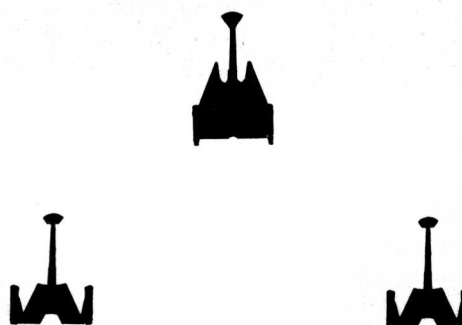
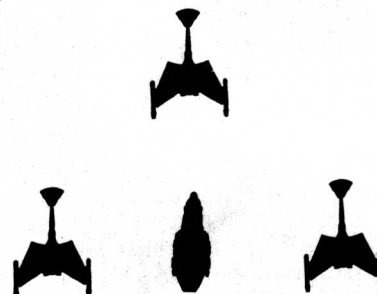
### SQUADRON OPERATIONS

Squadron operations are very common in the Imperial Navy, and have been covered by Klingon tacticians in great detail. As mentioned above, a squadron consists of three (or five) ships under a unified command. Unlike those in Star Fleet, Klingon Squadrons are named after their commander, "Kolar's Squadron," for example. Depending on the scope of an assigned mission, it is possible for a Squadron to have a fleet tender (S-4 or S-5 class ship) assigned to it. This only takes place on extended independent operations (see below).

The composition of an individual Squadron varies, but there are some basic ground rules. One of the most common, and famous, groupings involves three D-7 cruiser variants. This has proven to be one of the most flexible groupings in the Klingon Navy, especially since the addition of the D-7M and D-7S to the Klingon inventory. As a general rule cruisers tend to be placed in Squadrons together, with the exception of the D-10 class vessels. These ships, in addition to the L-6, L-9, and L-42 class frigates, are usually placed in a Squadron with two destroyer-class ships (the D-2, D-14, and D-18 classes are popular) as escorts. A Squadron centered around either a D-10 or one of the frigates is a very powerful fighting force. Gunboats and smaller ships

operate in Squadrons of five ships. It is worth noting that scout class ships will occasionally form Squadrons, but NEVER Battle Groups.

To give Star Fleet officers an idea of a typical Squadron, let us look at one of the Klingons' best; Kolar's Squadron, currently stationed on the Orion Border. Kolar's Squadron is made up of D-7 Cruiser class ships; a D-7M (the flagship), a D-7A, and a D-7G. Since Kolar's Squadron is intended to be capable of mounting independent patrols, it has an S-5 class tender attached to it. An example of a heavier Squadron is Kaz's Squadron, which is centered around a D-10H heavy cruiser and has two D-18B destroyers attached for support. Kaz's Squadron operates mainly along the Romulan Border.



Regardless of the composition of a Squadron, they all operate in a similar fashion. Klingon Squadrons travel in a formation known as *k'tazi*, or the arrowhead. This is simply a wedge-shaped formation, like a triangle, with one ship at each of the three corners. Squadrons of gunboats or escorts usually travel in the arrowhead formation, but with additional ships on the sides. If a tender is accompanying a Squadron, it is kept in the hollow center of the arrowhead. The ship at the point of the formation is usually the Squadron flagship.

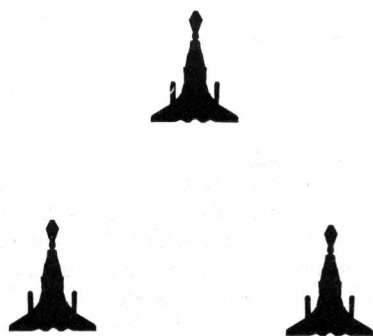
The tactics used by Squadrons are defined by Thought Admiral Kostantin as aggressive warfare, tempered only by the needs of the Empire and tactical considerations (like being outnumbered). Klingon Squadron Leaders have shown a strong preference for hit and run tactics. They like to swoop down on their enemies and attack without warning. To achieve this tactical surprise (which is highly praised in all Klingon tactical works) Klingon Captains will go to great lengths. When ambushing convoys they like to hide their ships in asteroid belts, using remote sensor drones to keep track of their target.

If it is impossible (or not practical) to achieve surprise, Klingon Squadrons will often attack at once, forming a line abreast out of the arrowhead formation. Such an attack is very dangerous to most Star Fleet ships, regardless of the class of the attacking Klingon ships, due to the massive firepower Klingon vessels have in forward positions.

Certain ships, notably the D-2B (Stingtongue) Class VI Destroyer, have shown a definite preference for the line abreast attack, as it gives them a chance to concentrate their massive missile firepower.

To the average Squadron commander, Klingon warfare stresses movement. Thus, during a battle a Klingon Squadron will spend a great deal of time trying to get behind their foes or in some way confuse them. If Klingon Squadron Leaders feel that they are being outmaneuvered, they will often attempt to disengage. To the Klingons this is not cowardly, but it is an attempt to save valuable resources for the Empire. Such movement warfare is more common in the destroyer Squadrons, since their light weapons load (compared to the cruisers) makes movement their best weapon.

The advent of the cloaking device has added a new dimension to Klingon Squadron tactics. Ships that are equipped with this device are always posted together, and form their own Squadrons. One of the most effective cloaked Squadrons is Kilistz' Squadron, known throughout the Triangle for their jet black D-14B Class VI Destroyers, Cloaked Squadrons, or Invisible Squadrons as the Klingons call them, will deploy to their patrol area, cloak, and wait in ambush for a predetermined amount of time. Then they will move on to their next area and repeat the process until their patrol cycle ends.



There is a final type of Squadron operations that is rather unique to Klingon tactical doctrine. This is the concept of Independent Operations. In normal circumstances a Squadron operates out of a base, be it a Starbase or a defense outpost. On Independent Operations, the Squadron is cut loose from all support and operates on its own. For these operations one or more tenders (S-4 or S-5 class ships) are added to the Squadron to help maintain the ships. The crews are expected to forage for supplies; this usually involves convoy raiding. Most of the famous raiding expeditions undertaken by Imperial forces were done as Independent Operations.

In some cases a Squadron sent on an Independent Operation is given a specific goal or mission. In this case, combat will usually be avoided until after the mission is carried out. This is one of the few cases when a Klingon ship will actually refuse combat regardless of the circumstances.

As might be expected, the most popular Squadron for Independent Operations is the traditional D-7 grouping. In recent years, though, the L-9 Squadrons have gained a reputation for successful I.O.s that rivals that of the D-7.

It should be noted that Klingons do take prisoners, but only if it is practical or necessary. They will attack any ship, armed or not, that ventures into space claimed by the Empire. They will also attack ships that are more powerful than their Squadron, simply to prove that it can be done.

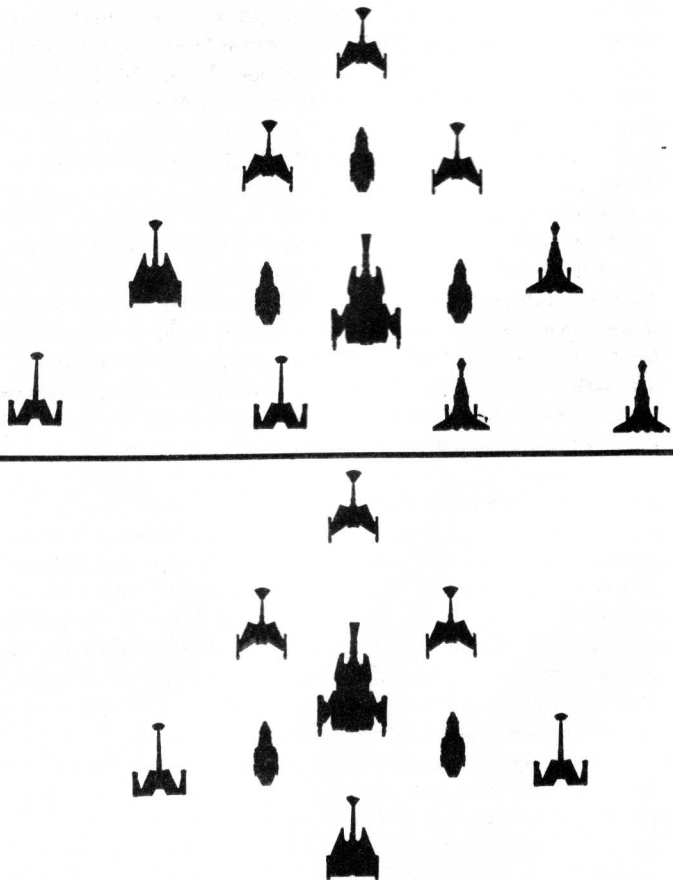
An additional note is required concerning the position/title of Squadron Leader in the Imperial Navy. While the Squadron Leader usually holds the rank of Captain, he is the leader of his Squadron. This is understood by Klingon officers, and the title Squadron Leader is used instead of Captain in this case.

## BATTLE GROUP OPERATIONS

Battle Group tactics are similar to Squadron tactics. The firepower tends to be greater, especially if the Battle Group is commanded by an Admiral in a battleship, but the general purpose remains the same. As mentioned above, a Battle Group is simply two to three Squadrons placed under unified command, usually that of an Admiral. The individual Squadrons still exist, but they are now part of a numbered Battle Group. For example; Kolar's Squadron, Kaz' Squadron, and Kilistz' Squadron are unified under the command of Admiral Kutan zantai-Lisson as Battle Group 'One'. In addition to the ships belonging to the individual Squadrons, Battle Group One contains three tenders (S-5s) and the Admiral's flagship, the L-24 *Emperor's Fist*. Such a Battle Group would only be formed during a crisis situation, and would not remain in existence long. It is worth noting that the three-Squadron version is much more common than the weaker version. Klingons believe in concentrating their striking power as much as possible.

Battle Groups travel in a unique formation. Each Squadron remains in an arrowhead, but these smaller arrowheads are combined to form what is known as a *d'li'k'tazi*, or grand arrowhead. In such a formation the strongest Squadron is placed at the point, with the weaker Squadrons forming the corners. In the hollow center of this formation is the flagship and any tenders assigned to the Battle Group. During combat the grand arrowhead, like the smaller version, is converted into a line abreast.

Two diagrams are shown below, one for the three-Squadron formation and one for the two-Squadron variant. As can be seen, the two-Squadron version involves the splitting of the second Squadron.



Battle Group tactics stress shock over surprise, as the Klingon tacticians feel that such a large formation would have a hard time sneaking up on anyone. When a Klingon Battle Group goes into combat, each Squadron tries to locate the opposing flagship and destroy it. In some cases a single Squadron will be given this duty, while

the other Squadron(s) and the flagship engage the opposing ships.

Admiral Kutan zantai-Lisson, one of the Imperial Navy's newest tacticians, has evolved a new doctrine known as *las'ti'chitan*, literally "disunified command." According to this popular doctrine, the flagship and its attending Admiral exercise control over the Battle Group only during non-combat situations. During combat, the separate Squadrons act as individual units. This gives the Klingons some immunity from the problems that can result from the destruction of a flagship. It also conforms to the Klingon doctrine of mobile warfare, as it allows each Squadron to act as it would in Squadron combat. This disunified command approach often gives defending Star Fleet officers the impression that they are being attacked by more ships than they really are.

If one of the Squadrons in a Battle Group is an Invisible Squadron, things often proceed differently. Disunified command is NEVER used in such a case; instead an ambush is set. Any ships that are able to cloak (at least three) do so, and the rest of the Battle Group act as bait, attempting to lead any enemy ships into the cloaked ships' weapons arcs. Then the waiting ships uncloak and the fleeing vessels turn suddenly and open fire.

In addition to the usual Battle Group, the Klingons often use a very similar formation known as an Assault Group. This is similar to a Battle Group, except that one of the Squadrons involved is always an Assault Squadron. This Assault Squadron is composed of anywhere from one to four Assault Ships of either the T-5 or T-12 class. The Assault Group is only used when a small planet is to be invaded or reinforced. It is a rare formation in the Imperial Navy, and is seldom seen near Federation borders.

Independent Operations are seldom undertaken by Battle Groups for the simple reason that they are too large to be effective in such a function. The simple fact that battleships are often included in Battle Groups precludes their use on I.O.s since a battleship represents too much of an investment to be risked in such a fashion. Experience has also shown Klingon tacticians that Battle Groups are too hard to support away from major repair facilities for the length of time an Independent Operation requires.

This is not to say that Battle Groups do not operate on their own. One of the prime requirements of a Battle Groups is that it should be able to support itself in a combat environment for a reasonable length of time. In any case, the planners in the Imperial Klingon Navy have decided that the Battle Group is not suited for Independent Operations, and thus it is never seen on them. The reasons for this decision are more political than military, as a Battle Group is considered much too powerful to be trusted under independent command conditions.

It is worth noting here that it would be possible for the Klingons to form an Invisible Squadron! Given the number of ships in the Imperial Navy that are fitted with cloaking devices, such a formation would be quite powerful. Such a group might be organized as follows: 1 L-13D battleship, the flagship; Kinin's Squadron (2 D-7S cruisers and 1 D-7R cruiser); Kuln's Squadron (3 D-32C cruisers); and Kija's Squadron (1 K-22B scout and 2 D-14B destroyers). No tenders or assault ships would be attached, unless specially-modified versions with cloaking devices became available. Please note that all the Squadrons mentioned above do exist. It is possible that the Klingons have in fact used such a Battle Group. If it did exist, Battle Group 5 (my name) would be primarily a raiding/espionage unit.

## WAR OPERATIONS

The final tactical unit used by the Klingon Navy is the War Operations unit. This is one of the largest, and rarest, groupings in the Klingon Navy. It has not been seen by the Federation since the Four Years' War.

A War Fleet is composed of any number (usually from four to eight) Battle Groups and Assault Groups. This entire force is placed under the command of either three Admirals and two Generals or two

Thought Admirals and two Generals. The Generals are included in the chain of command for the simple reason that they command all the Imperial Marines on the Assault Ships, and they handle the land actions. A War Fleet travels in a special box formation known as *K'nan'oltaz*, or the Emperor's Fortress. This box is formed by individual Battle Groups acting as the sides with the Assault Groups, the Command Squadron (two battleships (of either type) and one L-42A or B frigate escort), and the Support Squadron (any tenders and Mobile Repair Facilities) in the center of this Fortress.

A War Fleet forming up for combat is, according to Admiral Kutan, one of the most impressive sights in the universe. While Admiral Kutan might be exaggerating, the sight of anywhere from thirty to one hundred fighting starships forming a Battle Line must be truly awesome. Since the War Fleet is so rare, it is difficult to find any established guidelines for its use in combat. It can be assumed, though, that it acts like a large version of the Battle Group. It is unlikely that disunified command would be used with a force of this size. War Fleets NEVER engage on Independent Operations.

Given the size of the Klingon Empire, it is probable that there are other tactical doctrines in existence that the Federation is not yet aware of. The existence of another Klingon foe to coreward (revealed by findings of Operation Dixie) and the fact that certain classes of Klingon vessels (the D-20 class cruisers and the K-24 and K-27 class escorts being three good examples) are almost never encountered by Star Fleet ships make this almost certain. Thus Star Fleet officers must always be on their guard when facing Klingon vessels. It is possible that your ship might be a test subject for a new Klingon tactical idea!

What follows are some historical examples of the Klingon tactical ideas discussed above. Each example is drawn from Star Fleet records when possible, or from de-classified Operation Dixie materials if no Fleet records exist. Remember that these are only examples. Klingon tactics are constantly changing!

## SINGLE SHIP COMBAT

### THE BATTLE FOR FREIGHTER QX-12

This action took place on Stardate 2/1204 in the Orion Neutral Zone. In addition to the Aakenn class freighter, the battle involved the USS *Montgomery* (NCC-4438), a *Larson* class destroyer, and the IVK *Falcon*, a D-2A destroyer. The *Montgomery* was escorting freighter QX-12 to Starbase 12 when its sensors picked up an unknown ship closing fast. *Montgomery* made challenge at once, as per regulations, and warned the other ship off. The *Falcon*, which was operating as a privateer, ignored the challenge and opened fire with the twin photon torpedo tubes mounted forward. This salvo ripped the port warp engine from *Montgomery* and disabled her fire control computers. Before the Engineering Officer could begin repairs, the *Falcon* turned quickly and fired the two rear mounted torpedo tubes. This salvo destroyed the bridge and turned *Montgomery* into a vacuum-filled cemetery. Freighter QX-12 was never heard of again, and it is assumed that the *Falcon* destroyed it, too.

SOURCE: COMMUNICATIONS BUOY 4438-2C, STAR FLEET RECORDS COMPUTER

## SQUADRON COMBAT

### BORDER INCIDENT #45612

This famous action also took place in the Orion Neutral Zone, and it marks the first defeat inflicted on Kolar's Squadron by Star Fleet forces. The date of this historic combat was Stardate 2/1201. Kolar's Squadron consisted of a D-7M cruiser (the flagship), a D-7A cruiser, and a D-7G cruiser. The Federation force, Task Force 41, was lead by Captain Tracy Henderson. Her flagship was the USS *Bismarck* (NCC-

1704), a *Constitution* class cruiser. The remainder of Task Force 41 was the *USS Yamato* (NCC-1705), another *Constitution* class cruiser, and the *USS Dallas* (NCC-2759), a *Loknar* class frigate.

As would be expected, Kolar's Squadron arrived in Sector Alpha 19 at high warp speed, hoping to catch Task Force 41 napping. Unfortunately for Captain Kolar's plans, the Captain of the D-7G was too anxious, and he brought his ship out of warp too soon, allowing the *Bismarck* to pick up the Squadron on sensors. Captain Henderson called her Task Force to battle stations and warned the Klingons off. The D-7G chose to open fire, but the range was too great for his Romulan plasma torpedo.

By now Kolar realized that his attack had failed, and he tried to disengage. But Captain Henderson's blood was up, and she was determined to cripple Kolar's Squadron before it left Federation space. She directed the *Yamato* and the *Dallas* to concentrate their fire on the hapless D-7G while she took the *Bismarck* after the Klingon flagship. The D-7G came apart under the concentrated fire, and its Captain chose to self-destruct rather than surrender.

The duel between Kolar and Captain Henderson was less decisive. As many analysts on both sides had feared, the two cruisers proved to be more or less evenly matched. After a couple of volleys of torpedos, Kolar moved off at high warp speed and Captain Henderson declined to follow. By then the D-7A had been heavily damaged and captured, and Task Force 41 returned to Starbase 12 with its captive in tow. Task Force 41 sustained minor damage in the encounter, most of it being inflicted on NCC-1704 by Kolar's flagship, the D-7M .  
**SOURCE: AFTER-ACTION REPORT #99843BCH, STAR FLEET RECORDS COMPUTER**

## BATTLE GROUP COMBAT

### DE-CLASSIFIED DOCUMENTS: THE ROMULAN INCIDENT

AS the title indicates, there are no recent examples of Battle Group combat against Federation ships, so we must turn to the Klingon-Romulan conflicts. This battle took place on Stardate 2/0804, just before the signing of the first Klingon-Romulan agreements. This combat took place in the area known as the Triangle.

Exact details about this battle are not known, so it is only possible to give a rough outline of the forces involved. The Klingons used Battle Group Ten, which was composed of two Squadrons of D-21A cruisers and the Battle Group commander's D-10A. An additional Squadron of D-18A destroyers was involved. There were a total of ten Klingon ships involved.

Facing Battle Group Ten was the Romulan First Flotilla. This unit was composed of a mixed group of V-4 cruisers and V-8 cruisers. The exact breakdown is not known, but there were ten Romulan ships involved.

The Klingon ships were caught in an ambush by the V-8 cruisers, who had been cloaked, and appeared suddenly to fire their plasma torpedos. In spite of this the Klingons managed to make short work of the V-4s, sustaining the loss of two cruisers and one destroyer. Then the V-8s began using their plasma torpedos to great effect, and the destroyer Squadron was smashed in a matter of minutes.

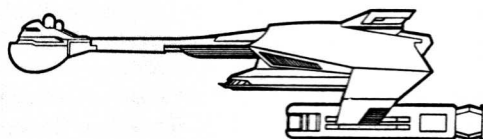
The remaining Klingon ships apparently formed a circle around the area that the V-8s were firing from and used blind fire to force them to uncloak. Once the V-8s were visible, the D-10 quickly crippled two of them. Before they could finish the job, one of the D-20As detached as a guard ship detected a large Romulan rescue force closing at warp two, and the remains of Battle Group Ten departed at high warp speed.  
**SOURCE: OPERATION DIXIE DE-CLASSIFIED FILE #RSK14090**

There are no known examples of any recent War Fleet operations, so no example of this type of fleet operation will be given. The simple fact that War Fleets only exist during wars explains this. There has been no major war fought by the Imperial Navy since Stardate 2/0902, the official end of the Romulan-Klingon conflicts.

It is the hope of the author that this article will help Star Fleet officers learn about their enemy. Any updates regarding Klingon tactics should be forwarded to the author c/o Star Fleet Training Command.

This material has been reviewed by Star Fleet Intelligence (Station ZR-12) and contains no unauthorized information. It conforms in every way with Federation Security Act A175 Sec. 145.45 Para. 189. This article is based on independent research and it does not necessarily reflect the opinions of Star Fleet Command.

The author extends his thanks to the members of Operation Dixie who gathered much of the information used in this article. Additional thanks are also due to Commander Stephanie Thomas of Star Fleet Public Relations, for her aid in obtaining Operation Dixie documents.



*The Imperial Klingon Navy*  
wants

**YOU**

to join them in combat at any time,  
any place of their choosing.  
Every meeting should be an enjoyable  
fight to the finish (yours they hope!).