

Flight of the Stag



Flight of the Stag by J. Andrew Keith

This folio adventure is designed for characters with Navy, Marine, or Scout Service backgrounds recalled to active duty during the Fifth Frontier War. The referee may draw characters from any source desired, including existing campaigns; it is urged that characters used have the skills needed for starship operation.

The characters used in FLIGHT OF THE STAG are personnel attached to the Close Escort *Stag*. Details on the statistics, performance, and layout of this ship can be found by consulting GDW's Supplement 7, *Traders and Gunboats*. Also needed to play this adventure is *High Guard*, TRAVELLER Book 5. Supplement 3, *The Spinward Marches*, may also be useful.

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Adventures

W.H. KEITH 81

Flight of the Stag

Background: During the early stages of the Fifth Frontier War, Zhodani forces from Querion occupied several independent worlds along the fringe of the Imperium, a strategic move that served a number of useful purposes. At one stroke the Zhodani were poised closer to their allies in the Swords Worlds, and at the same time were placed in a position to overawe the neutral Darrian Confederation. Finally, the Zhodani captured the Imperial Communications Research Station on Retinae as well as Thanber, a neutral, independent world with a strategic position and close ties to the Imperium. But the Zhodani could not afford to maintain large forces in the region, as they were badly needed elsewhere; forces were soon drawn off for use in the offensives in the Jewell and Regina subsectors and to reinforce the fleet besieging Frenzie/Villis. The newly conquered region settled into comparative obscurity as the crucial battles of the war raged far away.

The Imperium sought to transform this quiet region into a new front, hoping thus to divert Zhodani attention and, at the same time, bolster Imperial morale and prestige. A fleet under Vice-Admiral Jaeren haut-Alloran was dispatched, and after a short series of well-planned moves, liberated Thanber. Prince Eorn, a pro-Imperial figure of some considerable popularity and power, was installed as the head of the planet's new government. Thanber then became the headquarters for further operations of the Imperial fleet throughout the region.

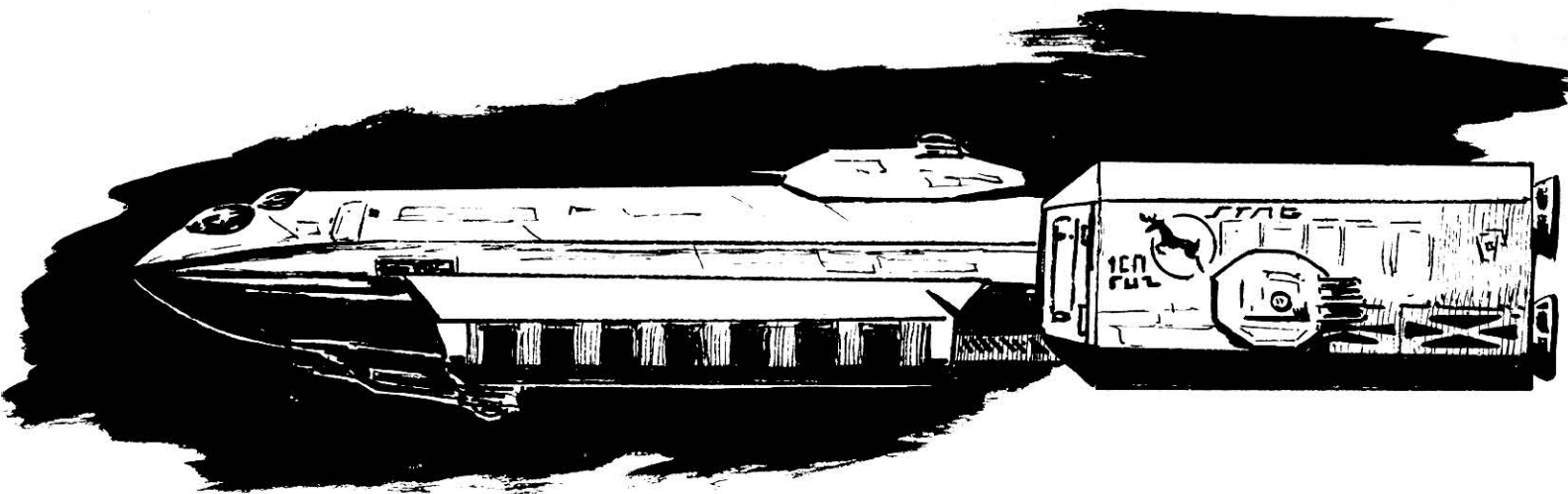
But the Imperial effort received little support once the initial success had been achieved. The Zhodani threat to crucial Imperial systems led to a general failure to exploit the possibilities opened up by the fall of Thanber. Reinforcements were sent to other fronts, and haut-Alloran found it necessary to commit many of his precious ships to peripheral operations. He soon found that his squadron at Thanber was far too small to support any kind of major effort. And it was at this crucial moment that the Zhodani unveiled their counterthrust.

The Zhodani attack was well-planned, and came in great strength. The Imperial gains of the past months were erased almost without a pause, and the core of the fleet was caught near Thanber and utterly defeated. At the same time, other Zhodani forces penetrated past Thanber and drove hard into Imperial space in the Vilis Subsector.

The Stag, a Close Escort, was assigned by Vice-Admiral haut-Alloran to an important task. As it became obvious that the Zhodani had the upper hand at Thanber, it fell to the Stag to take on board Prince Eorn, Thanber's recently-installed ruler, and get him clear of the Zhodani thrust. In a message sent shortly before his flagship was destroyed, haut-Alloran reiterated his orders. The escape of Prince Eorn to the safety of Imperial space would provide a vital rallying point to later operations at Thanber. Failure could mean the end of the pro-Imperial movement on the world.

Brought aboard hastily, the Prince is unceremoniously taken to a cabin as Stag prepares for a dangerous voyage. Already a small Zhodani squadron has broken through and is closing on the Close Escort; they must escape to a safe jump point if any chance of survival is to be theirs. But that is only the first step, for surrounding stars have also been occupied. Decisions must be made. . . and each decision could well be the last for the crew of Stag. . .





Referee's Notes

The referee must set up the basic parameters of the game by consulting the star map on the back page of this folio, showing the region where the Querion, Villis, Darrian, and Swords Worlds sub-sectors of the Spinward Marches come together. For each system, the military situation must be designated -- the system can be Zhodani-controlled, Imperial-controlled, Disputed, or Neutral. Worlds belonging to the Darrian Confederation are the only neutrals.

The designation will determine which encounter table is to be used. There are no tables for Imperial or neutral systems; reaching one of these ends the adventure. For the others, an Encounter will take place if the roll of two dice equals or exceeds the number shown in parentheses. If an Encounter does occur, the exact nature of the Encounter is found by rolling one die on the table proper.

Encounters with enemy vessels will often result in a battle. These should be resolved according to *HIGH GUARD* rules, though the referee may feel free to use any system he desires, if he wants a more free-form game. If the Stag incurs major damage of any kind, repairs will be makeshift at best. Encounters are most dangerous when the Stag is low on fuel. Usually an escape by jump is possible, if the enemy appears.

The Stag: A Close Escort of the Gazelle class, the Stag has a crew of 12. It is capable of Jump-4 and Maneuver-4. The ship is armed with two triple laser turrets and two particle accelerator barbettes. The ship also carries a laser-armed gig.

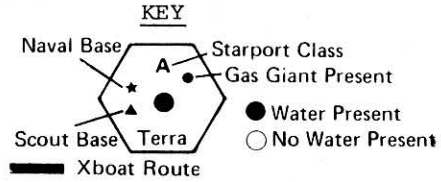
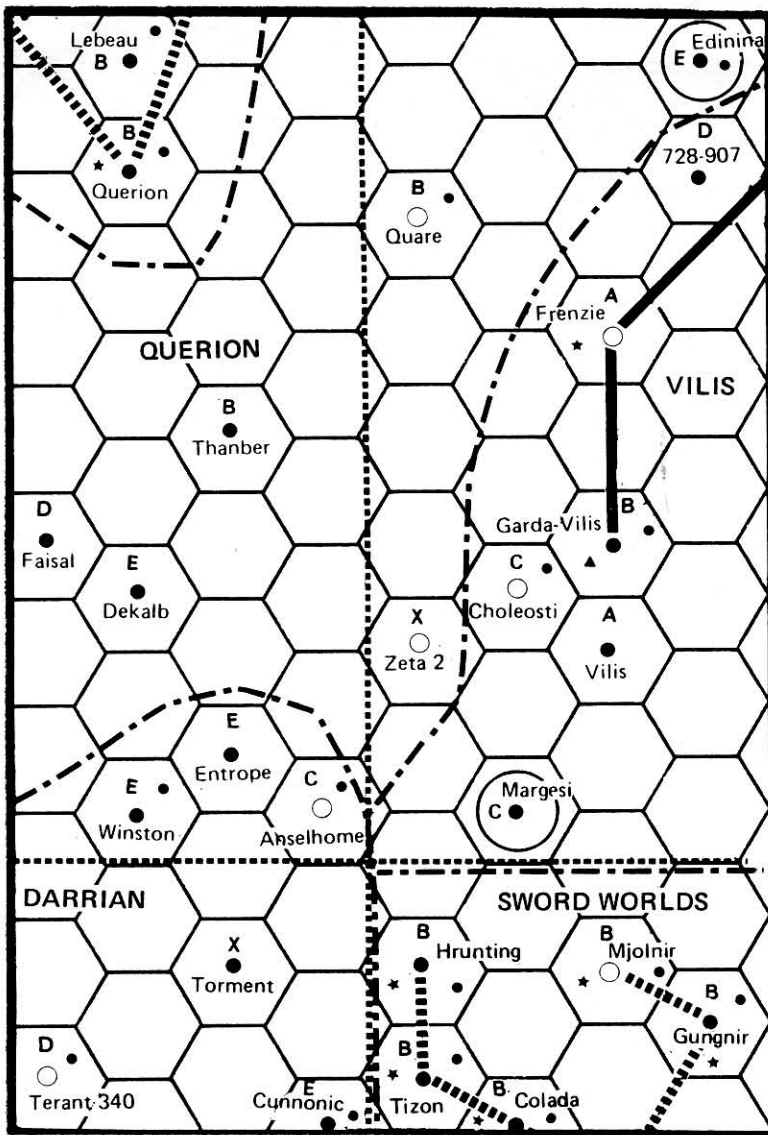
High Guard Stats: CE-13791 Stag CE-3455762-300000-401000-0 MCr 353.30 400 tons
batteries bearing 2 2 Crew=12
batteries 2 2 TL=14

Passengers=0. Low Berths=0. Cargo=6. Fuel=81. EP=21. Agility=0. Troops=0.

Note:L-Hyd Tanks add 100 tons of fuel and mass (CE-4444762) and cost MCr .11

Fueling: Stag is fitted with a Jump Governor (see *HIGH GUARD*), and can make short jumps to leave fuel in her tanks on arrival. Refueling is possible from gas giants.

The L-Hyd Tanks: During the initial pursuit situation the Referee should arrange to have Stag suffer minor damage. This damage will take the form of a failure in Stag's L-Hyd tank release, making it impossible for the ship to drop tanks and achieve a greater range. The problem will be insoluble for the crew, and will require repairs at a starport.



ENCOUNTER TABLES

1. Zhodani-controlled systems (7+)

- 1 Zhodani ship
- 2 Shodani ship
- 3 Zhodani squadron
- 4 Zhodani squadron
- 5 Zhodani squadron
- 6 Zhodani fleet

2. Disputed systems (5+)

- 1 Zhodani squadron
- 2 Zhodani squadron
- 3 Zhodani fleet
- 4 Imperial Squadron
- 5 Imperial Squadron
- 6 Battle

Roll once on entering system, then again for each hour spent in the same system. Referee may choose to make special cases -- i.e. a squadron near a strategic gas giant, et cetera.

EXPLANATION OF ENCOUNTERS

ZHODANI SHIP: A small ship (800 tons or less). Attacks on 7+, otherwise departs to summon reinforcements. If it withdraws, a squadron (see below) arrives in 2 hours.

ZHODANI SQUADRON: 2-12 Zhodani ships of various sizes. These always attack.

ZHODANI FLEET: A large force of Zhodani vessels. Stag has 1 hour to escape; otherwise overwhelming firepower will be brought to bear and she will be destroyed.

IMPERIAL SQUADRON: 2-12 Imperial ships. These will escort Stag to safety on roll of 6+. Escort means game ends with players' successful escape. If they do not escort, they will give news of situation at one neighboring star system (Referee's choice).

BATTLE: Major engagement in progress. Each hour, roll again. Imperial squadrons escort only on 9+ while battle rages. Every three hours, roll 2D. 5- indicates a Zhodani victory, 10+ is Imperial victory. Otherwise, battle continues.