

The Virginia Project

Background

2202 AD

After its war with the White Comet Empire, the Earth Defense Force was left in a severely weakened state. Building upon the lessons learned in the war, the Earth Defense Force set about on several new warship building projects. One of these projects, with the goal of producing a new class of battleship, was given the name "Virginia".

The White Comet Empire, while dealt a serious blow by the destruction of *Gatlantis*, was far from destroyed. The Empire withdrew from Earth space and prepared for a counter-attack, a counter-attack that never arrived. Suspicious of the Earthlings, the Cometine command continued to observe Earth's activities and became aware of the Earth Defense Force's construction projects.

After a seemingly endless series of delays and opposition, the Virginia Project entered its deep space trials. The Empire viewed the remote operations of the prototype ship as an opportunity to maintain the Defense Force's weakened state and to strike revenge for the death of their Prince Zordar.

Acting quickly, the White Comet Empire dispatched a hastily assembled fleet to destroy the Earth prototype. Caught by surprise and amidst test operations, the *Virginia* and its escort must fend off the Empire attack while preventing the disruption of the test and capture of sensitive data. The opportunity for proving the new design in actual combat could not be missed.

Orders of Battle

Earth Defense Force

- 1 x *Orion*-class prototype space battleship (*Virginia*),
flagship
 - 4 x *Astro Ascender* military shuttles
 - 2 x *Cosmo Falcon* reconnaissance craft (ACHS)
- 1 x *Borodino*-class space battleship
 - 36 x *Cosmo Tiger II* space superiority fighters
 - 18 x *Cosmo Tiger II* attack bombers
 - 4 x *Astro Ascender* military shuttles
 - 2 x *Cosmo Falcon* reconnaissance craft (ACHS)
- 2 x *Konigsberg*-class space patrol cruisers
 - 2 x *Astro Ascender* military shuttles
 - 4 x *Cosmo Falcon* reconnaissance craft (ACHS)
- 9 x *Gearing*-class space destroyers
 - 18 x *Astro Ascender* military shuttles
- 1 x *Oceania*-class coupling device sectional freighter
 - 24 x *Astro Ascender* military shuttles

White Comet Empire

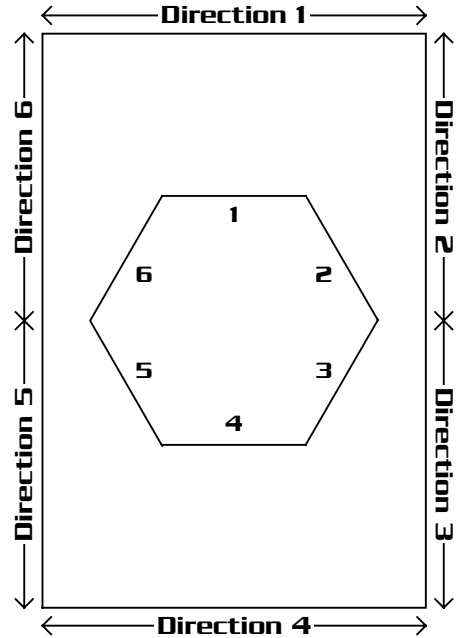
- 1 x *Bringer of Victory*-class space attack battleship,
flagship
 - 3 x *Strider* standard transport shuttlecraft
 - 1 x *Scorpion* long range reconnaissance craft
- 1 x *Exterminator*-class space attack missile cruiser
 - 2 x *Strider* standard transport shuttlecraft
 - 1 x *Scorpion* long range reconnaissance craft
- 1 x *Hailstorm*-class high speed single deck space
attack carrier
 - 24 x *Eetaa II* space superiority fighters
 - 30 x *Scorpion* space strike fighter
 - 6 x *Havoc* heavy space assault fighter
 - 10 x *Strider* standard transport shuttlecraft
 - 5 x *Scorpion* long range reconnaissance craft
- 3 x *Shadow*-class subspace submarines
- 6 x *Storm*-class destroyers
 - 12 x *Strider* standard transport shuttlecraft

Terrain

This battle was fought in open space. Use of a floating map is recommended.

Initial Setup

1. Six "sides" of the map are designated, based on the corresponding sides of a map hex (based on a scatter diagram). Sides 1, 2 and 6 should bound one half of the map, and sides 3, 4 and 5 should bound the other half.
2. The EDF secretly designates one or more (minimum of one) of her warships, excluding the *Virginia* and the sectional freighters, as "on patrol." These warships, along with their battlecraft and support craft complements, are out on an extended patrol and will arrive on a later turn. These warships, and their complements, are ignored in the remaining steps.
3. The EDF publicly designates the map direction in which the warships on patrol are patrolling. The patrol may be in direction 1, 2 or 6. This is the direction that the patrol warships will arrive from.
4. The WCE assigns each of his warships, except for the submarines, to one of three groups. Each group will arrive from a separate direction. Group 1 will arrive from direction 3, group 2 from direction 4, and group 3 from direction 5. One or two groups may be completely empty.
5. The WCE secretly selects a direction in which each of the submarines will arrive. This direction may be *any* of the six map directions, including his arrival directions and the EDF patrol direction.
6. The WCE publicly states that his groups have been allocated. He does not state any directions; the EDF already knows his main groups are arriving from directions 3, 4, and/or 5, and his submarines are secret.
7. The EDF sets up all warships with any facing within four hexes of the center of the map half bounded by directions 1, 2 and 6. Unless noted otherwise, all battlecraft and support craft complements are on board their parent warships.
8. The EDF may assign up to one-third (rounding down) of the fighter and attack bomber flights (not including those carried by warships "on patrol") CAP missions and set them up within six hexes of the center of the map half bounded by directions 1, 2 and 6.
9. The EDF may assign up to one-third (rounding down) of the *Cosmo Falcons* (not including those carried by warships "on patrol") reconnaissance missions and set them up within twelve hexes of the center of the map half bounded by directions 1, 2 and 6.
10. The WCE sets up the warships of each group within four hexes of the map edge corresponding to the direction the group is arriving from. All warships must have a facing opposite the direction of their arrival (i.e. a warship arriving from direction "5" will have a facing of "2"). All battlecraft and support craft complements are on board their parent warships.
11. The WCE secretly sets up the submarines by recording a hex within four hexes of the map edge corresponding to the direction the triad is arriving from and their facing. Each warship must have a facing opposite the direction of their arrival (i.e. a submarine arriving from direction "3" will have a facing of "6").



All EDF warships start with a speed up to their power-rating factor. All WCE warships start with a speed up to twice the power-rating factor of the slowest warship in their group. No warships have accumulated special power.

Special Rules

EDF Patrol Arrival

All warships that were designated as "on patrol" during setup will arrive in the area after the start of the scenario. At the end of each turn, the EDF rolls a six-sided die. If the roll is less than or equals the current turn, the patrol has returned and will move onto the map on the next turn. The EDF then places each returning warship just off

the map, on the map edge corresponding to the EDF's patrol direction, adjacent to the hex that the warship will move into during its movement next turn. All battlecraft and support craft complements are on board their parent warships.

Each returning warship is then moved during the next turn as part of the normal movement sequence. The first movement point of the warship's movement must be used to move forward onto the map. Once the warship has moved onto the map, it will be considered to have met its minimum movement requirement for turns and sideslips. Battlecraft and support craft may be launched normally, subject to the normal launching requirements.

All returning warships arrive at a speed up to twice the power rating factor of the slowest warship and with a facing opposite the patrol direction (i.e. if the patrol direction is "2", then each warship has a facing of "5"). Each returning warship also accumulates special power normally for each turn that it is on patrol.

EDF Individual Ship Morale

As long as the *Virginia* is present (has not been destroyed nor has escaped), all EDF warships, except for the modular transports, are not subject to individual morale checks. The situation, however, is not sufficient to allow for ramming attacks.

The Virginia

The *Virginia* may only escape by accumulating enough special power to perform a strategic space warp. A strategic warp will be long enough to take the *Virginia* to safety; however, the operation is considered disrupted. Fleeing the combat is not sufficient, as the WCE fleet will simply pursue, unless the WCE fleet's morale has been broken; however the entire fleet may flee if their morale fails, but this will be a grave loss for the EDF.

The *Virginia* is a highly automated warship; however, the automation has not been fine-tuned yet. As a result, the *Virginia* will suffer a 10% penalty to all combat rolls, as per the rules on accumulated battle damage. This penalty is in addition to any penalty the *Virginia* may accrue from battle damage.

The *Virginia* is equipped with an ACACBI system.

The Sectional Freighter

The *Oceania*-class sectional freighter is being used by the Virginia Project as the operational base for the deep space trials of the *Virginia*. As such, the freighter contains both important data and material from the *Virginia*. While not as critical as the *Virginia* herself, care should be taken to avoid the material from falling into enemy hands.

WCE Data Recovery

Data about the Virginia Project can be recovered from the wreckage of the *Virginia* and the sectional freighter. Any support craft assigned a transport mission and not otherwise carrying cargo may be used to recover data from a debris field.

First, the support craft must "land" in the debris field, just as if the craft was attempting to land on a warship. All the normal requirements for landing must be met; however, the maximum speed of the debris field is the maximum landing speed of the support craft. When landing in the debris field, the support craft must make an asteroid collision check as normal. Once the craft has successfully landed, the craft will automatically move with the debris field on subsequent turns. Any battlecraft assigned to escort the support craft do not land and must move with the debris field on their own. Asteroid collision checks for escorts are made at one-half of their speed while escorting a landed support craft.

Once landed, the craft must spend one full turn in the field while its crew searches the debris. During this turn, the craft may not take any action or fire any weapons. Taking any action or firing any weapons will delay the recovery a turn. Launching will automatically abort the recovery attempt.

After successfully recovering data from the debris, the craft must launch from the debris. As with landing, launching from the debris is handled the same as the craft was launching from a warship. There is no asteroid collision check for the support craft or its escorts when launching and leaving the debris field. In order for the

data to be considered recovered, the support craft must first successfully land on board a friendly warship so that the data may be transferred off.

Data may only be recovered from a given hex of debris once. If data is recovered from a hex, and the shuttle is subsequently destroyed, that hex's data is lost. A single hex's debris is required for the data on a ship to be considered "recovered".

Victory Conditions

The winner is the side with the most victory points at the end of the scenario.

Length of Scenario

The scenario continues until all forces of one side have been destroyed, captured or disengaged.

Earth Defense Force Victory Points

Virginia successfully engaged in combat (hit with offensive weapon or special weapon): +1

Virginia survives, not disengaged: +3

Virginia survives, disengaged: +2

All WCE forces destroyed, captured or disengaged: +2

White Comet Empire Victory Points

Virginia destroyed or captured: +3

Data recovered from transport or *Virginia* debris, or *Virginia* captured: +2

All EDF forces destroyed, captured or disengaged: +1

Variations

Large Map

If a large map is available, the setup may be modified as follows.

1. The EDF patrol direction may be any of the six directions.
2. The WCE arrival directions may be any three adjacent map directions that do not include the EDF patrol direction. For example, if the EDF is patrolling in direction 2, the WCE may choose directions 1, 5 and 6 as his arrival directions.
3. The EDF forces are set up relative to the center of the whole map instead of map half.

Larger Forces

For a larger, more intense battle (a large map is suggested), the size of the forces may be increased.

1. Add 36 strike fighters and 18 attack bombers to the EDF's complement of the *Virginia*.
2. Add a *Borodino* battleship, 2 *Hood*-class battlecruisers, 9 *Gearing* destroyers, an *Oceania* freighter, and their appropriate complements to the EDF forces.
3. Replace the WCE's single deck carrier with a *Vengeful*-class twin deck space attack carrier. Add 24 *Eeta II* fighters, 24 *Tempest* multi purpose space fighters, 72 *Scorpion* fighters, 11 *Strider* shuttlecraft, and 2 *Scorpion* reconnaissance craft to its complement.
4. Add two *Bringer of Victory* battleships, a *Relentless*-class battlecruiser, three *Storm* destroyers, and their appropriate complements to the WCE forces.

Historical Outcome

Seeing the opportunity to prove the new design in actual combat, the *Virginia* led the attack on the main Cometine force while the transport attempted to withdraw. As the main EDF force engaged, the submarines emerged from subspace and destroyed the transport in a barrage of torpedoes. The *Virginia* coordinated a massed missile strike on the Cometine missile cruiser, but not before the cruiser was able to launch an anti-matter missile, crippling the *Virginia*. The EDF fleet proceeded to withdraw in good order in the direction of its patrol. The escort provided cover while the *Virginia* prepared for a space warp. The *Virginia* and her heavily damaged escort successfully withdrew via space warp, leaving the Cometine fleet to pick over the wreckage of the transport for data.

While the Virginia Project space trials were disrupted, the *Virginia's* performance in the combat proved it to be a viable design. The victory, however, was dulled by the knowledge that the WCE most likely was able to extract valuable data about the project from the wreckage of the transport that was serving as the mobile base for the space trials.

Tactics

Earth Defense Force

You don't have an easy job. You need to choose between risking the *Virginia* (and making the WCE's job easy) or keeping it out of combat (and safe). The key is to take advantage of the battleship's long range weaponry and ACACBI to perform long-ranged mass volleys.

While protecting the *Virginia*, don't forget to protect the vulnerable transport from destruction or capture. Remember, also, that data about the project can be recovered from both the *Virginia* and the transport.

Remember that submarines move via stealth and can come from any direction, and deploy your ACHS equipped reconnaissance craft appropriately.

Do not neglect your patrol. The patrol can be a handy ace when it arrives fresh and with charged wave motion guns.

White Comet Empire

Capitalize on the fact that you have, at most, two real targets: the *Virginia* and the transport. While unarmed and lacking in defenses, the transport will take several hits to destroy, but should not require major fleet assets. A submarine or two may be a good choice. The *Virginia* is much tougher with good defenses and a strong hull.

Concentrate fire on the *Virginia* until she is destroyed and then move in to capture her data or the transport's. Remember to escort your shuttlecraft on their gathering runs, as each hex of debris may only be collected from once.

You start out out-gunning the EDF, and you need to press the attack right away. If you delay your attack, you run the risk of wave motion guns and wave motion engines becoming charged, and of the EDF patrol returning.

Designer's Notes

This scenario was designed with two goals. The first was to serve as showcase for the Virginia Project, a joint project of Musashi Enterprises and Yamato Mechanics (Tamamori Jun-ichiro). The second was to provide an interesting tactical challenge.

The challenge, in this case, is that the best ship the EDF player has is the one that he cannot allow to be destroyed. If the *Virginia* is kept out of combat, the EDF loses a significant amount of throw weight in battle in which he's already at a slight disadvantage. If the *Virginia* is sent into combat, the WCE's job is made that much easier. It requires a careful balance, more so than is usually required for a fleet's flagship.