

Appendix B

Starship Combat Example

Colin Brett has been so kind as to let me publish his test run of the starship combat rules. See more of Colin’s work at <http://www.colinabrett.me.uk/>

Introduction

An example of starship combat in M-SPACE. Presented in “mechanical” and “narrative” formats, to describe the dice rolls and story aspects of a space battle. First, the ships.

SPEED	6
HANDLING	5
SIZE	110

Hit Locations	Hit Points
01-05 Bridge	5
06-11 Engines	6
12-16 Manoeuvre	5
17-35 Sick Bay	20
36-75 Crew	
Compartm.	50
76-80 Ion Cannon	5
81-84 Port Laser	4
85-88 Starboard	
Laser	4
89-96 Open Space	8
97-00 Hyperspace	3

Gamma Star – Solar Federation Patrol Ship

Bridge	5
Crew	50 (12 Crew members)
Weapons	13
Engine	6 (Thrust Rating 100)
Maneuver	5 (Thrust Rating 100)
Sick Bay	20
Hyperspace	3
Open Space	8
Shields	–
Armor	–
Apps	–

Weapons: Dorsal Ion Cannon (5): Damage 2D6+1, range 10, 360 degree arc. Port Laser (4): Damage 2D6. Starboard Laser (4): Damage 2D6.

Captain Kurt Torrance

A tough, no-nonsense, by the books ship captain with a strong sense of duty and fair play... except when dealing with pirates, whom he considers the "scum of the universe."

DEX 8
Action Points 2
Pilot 85%

General Crew Skills

Gunnery 80% , Mechanics 70%

Speeding Blade – Pirate Raider

Bridge	4
Crew	30 (7 Crew members)
Weapons	4
Engine	7 (Thrust Rating 70)
Maneuver	5 (Thrust Rating 70)
Sick Bay	1 (Autodoc)
Open Space	8
Hyperspace	3
Shields	–
Armor	–
Apps	–

Weapons: Prow Blaster (2): Damage 1D10, 90 degree forward arc. Stern Blaster (2): Damage 1D8, 180 degree rear arc

Captain Sasha Reeves

Hot-headed and somewhat reckless, she is wanted for numerous acts of piracy and smuggling and has been on the run for three standard years.

DEX 11
Action Points 2
Pilot 75%

General Crew Skills

Gunnery 75%, Mechanics 50%

SPEED	8
HANDLING	6
SIZE	62

Hit Locations	Hit Points
01-07 Bridge	4
08-19 Engines	7
20-28 Manoeuvre	5
29-30 Sick Bay	1
31-80 Crew	
Compartm.	30
81-84 Prow	
Blaster	2
85-88 Stern	
Blaster	2
89-96 Open Space	8
97-00 Hyperspace	3

The Scenario

The Gamma Star has been tracking the Speeding Blade. The Solar Federation vessel has one chance to capture or destroy the pirate before it escapes into an asteroid field. The GM controls the Gamma Star, while the PCs (Pirate Characters :) are aboard their ship, the fleeing Speeding Blade. Despite being pirates, and therefore “bad guys”, the PCs are regarded as the protagonists in this encounter, while the GM controls the antagonists.

The Situation (“Round 0”)

a) Mechanics

*Initiative for the first round:
1d10 + Handling*

*Choose Offensive or Defensive
Positioning.*

Both Captains order their crews. Initiative for the first round is made on D10 + Handling of the vessel. Torrance rolls D10 + 5, for a total of (3 + 5 =) 8; Reeves rolls (6 + 7 =) 13. A win for the pirate vessel. The captains must then choose whether to perform Offensive or Defensive actions. The pirate ship won initiative and the Captain elects to take Defensive actions, sensible against such a heavily armed warship. The Solar Federation vessel elects to take the Offense. Their actions will take place in Round 1, below.

b) Narrative

Aboard the Gamma Star ...

+++ SitRep to Captain Torrance +++

“We have her, sir. The Speeding Blade is heading towards an asteroid field.”

“Move to intercept before she gets in amongst the asteroids otherwise we’ll never find her.”

“Aye aye, Captain.”

Meanwhile, on the bridge of the Speeding Blade...

“We’ve been pinged, Captain! SolFed frigate closing fast!”

“All hands to battle stations. Prime cannons fore and aft. Flank speed to the asteroid field.”

“Aye aye, Captain.”

Round 1

a) Mechanics

The Speeding Blade has initiative at the start of this encounter.

Reeves begins Defensive manoeuvres and rolls 90% on her Pilot roll, a failure. Torrance makes Offensive Manoeuvres and rolls 61%, a success. This grants Torrance one level of success and he chooses the Dominate Special Effect, making his Gunnery rolls Easy (80% + 20% = 100%) this round.

Torrance's skilled Piloting grants him Gunnery initiative. He opens fire with the Dorsal Ion Cannon: a Gunnery roll of 74 is a hit. Reeves fires back with the stern blaster; gunnery is at Hard because of her Defensive Positioning. A roll of 05%, scoring a critical hit.

Torrance rolls 4 points of damage to the Speeding Blade's Sick Bay (location roll 29). The Sick Bay occupies one module and therefore has only one Hit Point; the Autodoc is in wrecks. It can't be repaired until they land next time. All pirates roll 1d4-1 for personal damage.

Reeves hits the Gamma Star's Crew Compartments (location roll 54%). She picks Maximum Damage as Special Effect (she has one Success Level higher than Torrance), for a total of 8 Hit Points damage.

Pilot initiative next round will go to the pirate vessel, as it had the highest success level in the last roll.

b) Narrative

Sasha Reeves knows she is heavily out-gunned and starts a series of tight turns and shifts in relative altitude. Torrance pursues with great skill, allowing him to target the fleeing pirate more easily. Gunfire lances through space, resulting in little more than scorched paint work.

Round 2

a) Mechanics

Reeves continues Defensive Manoeuvres and makes the first Pilot roll. With a 28% she scores a normal success.

Torrance continues the Offensive and rolls 41%, a success.

Both Captains made the same levels of success (one each), so no Special Effects are applicable. Gunnery initiative remains with Reeves.

Reeves fires with the Stern Blaster: a roll of 03 is a critical hit again! Torrance opens fire with both Port and Starboard Lasers, respectively rolling 81% (a miss) and 25%, a hit. This grants Reeves one level of suc-

Defensive Positioning: Make you harder to hit, but it's also more difficult for your own gunners to hit.

Success vs Failure: one success level grants one Pilot Special Effect.

Initiative changes to the participant with the highest level of success in the previous roll.

A section is beyond quick-fix repairs when hit points are reduced to their full negative value or lower.

Success vs Critical: one level of success grants one Gunnery Special Effect.

Initiative changes to the participant with the highest level of success in the previous roll.

When there are several cannons firing, match opposing rolls as far as possible. The best roll is used when success levels are compared.

Initiative remains unchanged when Levels of Success are equal.

cess and Gunnery initiative. She picks Maximum Damage (8). Location rolled: Crew Compartments.

Torrance's location roll is 56, Crew Compartments for 7 points of damage.

Initiative next round will stay with Reeves and she will make the first Pilot roll.

b) Narrative

Torrance continues his pursuit of the Speeding Blade, maintaining weapons lock on the fleeing pirate. Reeves seems unable to lose him. He fires both laser batteries and blows a hole in the side of the pirate ship. He smiles grimly.

Reeves retaliates in kind, the Speeding Blade's Stern Blaster lancing through the Crew Quarters.

Round 3

a) Mechanics

Successful Defensive Positioning: both ships' gunnery at Hard.

Reeves had one level of success in the previous Gunnery round: this grants her the Pilot initiative this round. She continues Defensive Manoeuvres and rolls 66% on her Pilot skill, a normal success; both ship's gunnery rolls will be Hard (-20%).

Torrance rolls 18% on Pilot skill and maintains Offensive Manoeuvres. Both Captains made the same levels of success (one each), so no Special Effects are applicable. Gunnery initiative remains with Reeves.

Reeves fires with the Stern Blaster, scoring 21%, a normal hit. Torrance retaliates with the Port Laser, rolling 54%, a hit.

Reeves rolls 7 points of damage against the Gamma Star's Dorsal Ion Cannon. The Cannon has only 5 hit points and so is disabled until repaired. All aboard Gamma Star rolls 1d4-1 for personal damage.

Torrance hits the Crew Compartments again. Damage is 10 points. Crew Compartment hit points are more than halved (30-7-10=13).

Initiative next round will stay with Reeves, as both gunnery rolls were at the same Success Level.

b) Narrative

The pursuit remains close, both Captains using every gramme of their skill to gain an advantage.

A hit exceeding a technical section's hit points renders it useless until repaired. All crew members must also roll for any personal damage.

Reeves is sickened by the losses her ship is sustaining. That Ion Cannon will be the death of us all, she thinks. She orders her gun crews to open fire and is rewarded when the Ion Cannon is hit with withering Blaster fire. Revenge is sweet!

Round 4

a) Mechanics

Reeves maintains Defensive Manoeuvres but rolls 90% for her Pilot skill, a failure. Her own ship's gunnery rolls will be Hard, but Gamma Star's gunnery is unaffected.

Torrance rolls 64% Pilot skill, granting him one level of success, for which he chooses the Dominate Special Effect, raising his Gunnery skill to 100%.

The SolFed ship fires first with Port and Starboard Lasers. These roll 22% and 35% respectively. The Speeding Blade retaliates with a 19% from the Stern Blaster.

Torrance scores normal hits for 2 points (against the Speeding Blade's Engines (not sufficient to disable the engines) and 7 points versus the Crew Compartments (only 6 hit points left in that section!)).

For Reeves, it's a hit against (location roll 31) the Gamma Star's Sick Bay, scoring 3 points (not enough to disable the medical facilities).

Initiative next round will be with Torrance.

b) Narrative

The ships continue their zig-zag race to the asteroid field.

Reeves, for the first time in three standard years, buckles herself into the pilot seat as the ship shakes under the pounding of the Gamma Star's lasers.

Torrance, for his part, is looking over damage assessments from the Speeding Blade. All in all, he thinks, things are going rather well.

Round 5

a) Mechanics

Torrance has the Pilot initiative but rolls a piloting failure. Reeves maintains Defensive Manoeuvres and this time rolls 24% Pilot skill. A success, which grants her one level of success over her opponent. Reeves gains Gunnery initiative this round and chooses the Dominate

Typically, crew compartments, open spaces and cargo bays are easy to hit, but they will not affect the ship very much. To get around this, use Special Effects like Marksman and Choose Location.

Failing Defensive maneuvers results in a gunnery penalty (-20%) only for the evading ship.

With hit locations, general hit points are not used.

Three successful Mechanics skill rolls are needed to take a damaged section on line again (restored to 1 hit point; this is only a temporary fix).

Special Effect, which will make her Gunnery rolls Easy (75% + 20% = 95%).

Rather than maintain his offensive this round, Torrance elects to repair the Dorsal Ion Cannon. He sends his best starship mechanics (losing the opportunity to open fire, as they were also gunners – lousy planning) and the Mechanics' skill roll is 21%, a success. Only two more successful rolls are needed to get it online again.

The pirate vessel opens fire, rolling 93%. Torrance returns fire with both lasers, rolling 34% and 14%.

Reeves roll would normally be a miss but her Piloting skill and choice of Special Effect makes this a hit instead. The damage roll is 4 versus the Crew Compartments (location roll 41).

Torrance hits the Crew Compartments (location roll 62), and Open Space (96). Damage rolls are 4 and 6 for Port and Starboard respectively.

Initiative next round will be with Reeves, as levels of success are the same.

b) Narrative

Torrance wants his Ion Cannon back on line. With it, he will be able to vapourise the Speeding Blade. He locks autopilot onto the pirate vessel and relays orders to the repair crews.

"Damn!" shouts Reeves as yet another burst of laser hit. Crew compartments will not stand another hit now, with only 2 hit points left. At least she has the satisfaction of seeing the SolFed ship being scorched too.

Round 6

a) Mechanics

Reeves chooses Offensive Positioning this time and her Pilot roll is 51%, a success. Torrance maintains Offensive posture and rolls 91%, another Pilot roll failure.

Reeves has one level of success and this time chooses Dominate, intending to take the fight to her pursuer. Her Gunnery skills are Easy (or 95%) this round.

The Speeding Blade turns and fires the Prow Blaster, rolling a 57%, a normal hit. Torrance fires back with Starboard Laser, rolling 58%, a hit.

Reeves hits the Gamma Star's Port Laser. The damage is 5 points, sufficient to disable the Laser.

Torrance makes 7 points of damage against the Speeding Blade's Open Space, hit points now below zero for that section. Rolling 1d6 on the Area Damage Table: the crew mess has a hull breach. Unless repaired, it will be in complete vacuum in 10 rounds. Everyone in the crew also take 1d4-1 hit point damage. Movement around the ship is also restricted, as security doors seal off the mess.

Initiative next round will remain with Reeves.

b) Narrative

With her ship badly mauled, Reeves elects to fight, not flee. She is sure her crew would support the decision, though there is no time for a bridge conference. She skillfully whips the Speeding Blade 180 degrees and flies straight at the Gamma Star. The specially augmented Prow Blaster catches the SolFed ship's Port Laser and she watches it blown into smithereens.

Torrance cannot believe the audacity of this common pirate. His Port Laser damaged, he retaliates with the Starboard Laser, striking a satisfactory hit against the Speeding Blade.

Round 7

a) Mechanics

Reeves rolls 03 on her Pilot skill (Offensive), a critical success. Torrance responds with a 15% Pilot roll, a normal success. Reeves chooses Dominate Special Effect again.

Reeves gains Gunnery initiative.

The Speeding Blade fires its Prow Blaster, this time rolling 22% (a hit). The Gamma Star returns fire with the Starboard Laser. It rolls 91%, a miss. One Gunnery Special Effect for Reeves.

Reeves hits the Gamma Star's Engine systems (location roll 09), for 8 points of damage (picking Maximum Damage). This is sufficient to disable the Gamma Star's engines (which have 6 Hit Points).

Initiative next round will be Reeves'.

For a hit exceeding a crew section's hit points, a roll on the Area Damage Table is made.

Just as in regular combat, finding weak spots like engines, maneuver, weapons, etcetera, is a very effective.

b) Narrative

The Speeding Blade continues her near-suicidal charge at the Gamma Star. Reeves' skills, audacity and sheer luck win out as the row Blaster destroys the enemy's drive system. The Gamma Star is adrift in deep space, maneuvering thrusters at least allowing for some movement.

Round 8

a) Mechanics

Reeves has Pilot initiative and rolls 08, another critical success (10% of Pilot skill 75 = 7.5, round up to 8).

Torrance, with disabled engines, is unable to pursue. The GM rules his Pilot skill roll is Formidable this round (85% - 40% = 45%). With a 16%, the SolFed ship turns towards the pirate vessel.

Reeves has one level of success in Piloting, so elects to take the Withdraw special effect.

The pirate vessel makes a parting shot from the Stern Blaster, rolling 59%, a hit against the Gamma Star's Sick Bay, for 3 points of damage. As Torrance is not firing back, she automatically receives a Special Effect: she picks Maximum Damage (8 points).

Torrance dispatches his mechanics to get the engines online again.

b) Narrative

It is a narrow escape. Reeves pulls a safe distance away from the Gamma Star and punches the badly damaged Speeding Blade into Hyperspace.

Torrance sees the pirate vessel vanish from his scanner screens and curses the enemy. I'll get you next time, he vows. But for now, he has more important matters to deal with.

Critical hits are 10% of the skill value.

Withdraw is a good Special Effect for getting out of a fight before being blown to pieces.