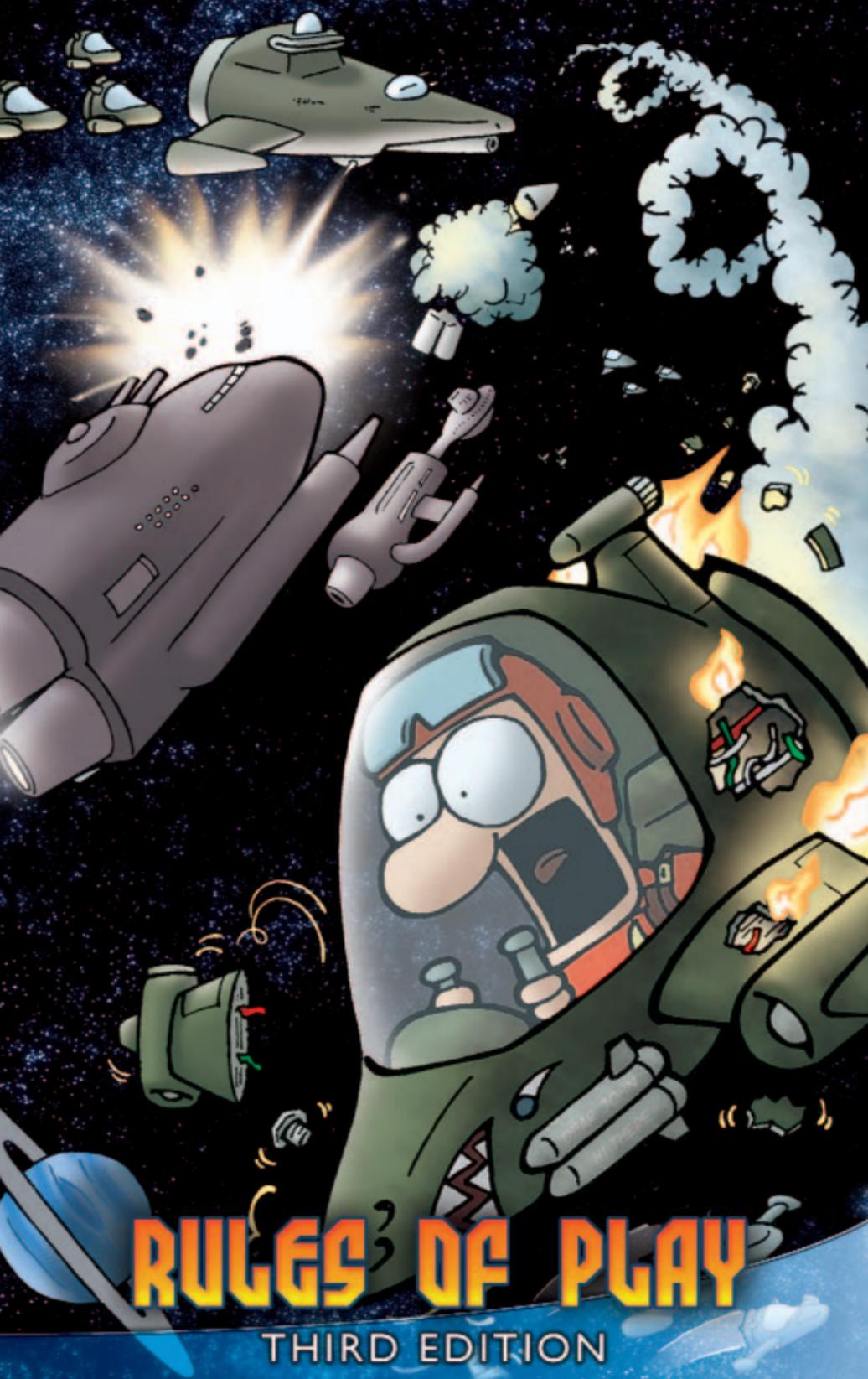# MAG·BLAST

RULES OF PLAY

THIRD EDITION

WELCOME TO

In space, everyone

Mag•Blast is a fast-paced, laser-blasting game of interstellar warfare. Players use ships, weapons, technology, and quick thinking to defend their command ships and blow their opponents to smithereens. Diplomacy has failed, and any hope for peace has been crumpled up and thrown in the wastebasket of the galaxy. The time for talk has passed – and **Mag•Blasts** speak louder than words!

INTRODUCTION

In **Mag•Blast**, you and your opponents take command of interstellar war fleets, each constructed and piloted by a different race – some familiar, and some completely alien. You command your fleet ships, which are both your offensive and defensive tools, from the relative safety of a command ship. Each command ship has a special ability that reflects the strengths of its race, and each fleet ship has different attributes. Ships are no good without ammunition and maneuvers, however, so you'd better hope you draw some good cards to supplement your fleet! If nothing else, you can always scavenge your own stores for resources in order to build more ships. As long as you can move your fleet ships into the line of fire to take the hits for your command ship, you'll survive…for one more turn.

OBJECT OF THE GAME

The object of the game is to destroy your opponents' command ships. When your command ship is the only one left in the game, you win!

MAG·BLAST!

can hear you scream!

COMPONENTS

10 Command Ship Cards
54 Fleet Ship Cards
- 12 Scouts
- 12 Cruisers
- 10 Destroyers
- 8 Carriers
- 6 Dreadnoughts
- 3 Minesweepers
- 3 Gunships

101 Action Cards
- 50 Blasts
  - 18 Laser blasts
  - 22 Beam blasts
  - 10 Mag blasts
- 22 Miscellaneous
- 13 Squadrons
- 8 Direct Hits
- 8 Direct Hit Effects

CREDITS

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COMMAND SHIPS

At the beginning of the game, each player will randomly be dealt a **command ship**. A command ship bears the elite generals of a starfaring empire on the march to war. Each command ship has a **hull strength**, four color-coded **zones**, and a **command ability**. If the term "ship" is used in the rules or on a card, it refers to command ships as well as to **fleet ships**.
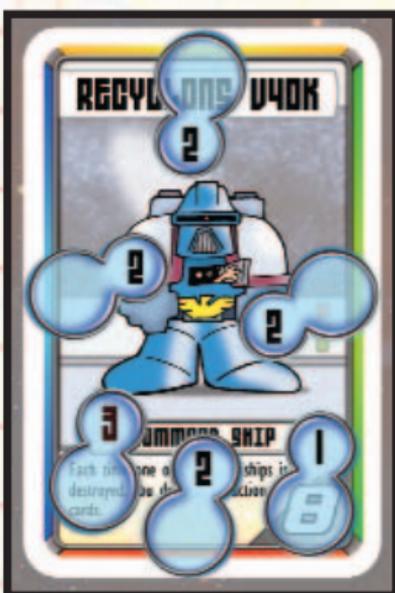
1. Hull Strength: This is how much punishment your command ship can take. If your command ship has damage cards beneath it equal to or greater than its hull strength, it is destroyed, you are eliminated from the game, and your entire civilization is obliterated. No pressure.

2. Zones: Your command ship is the center of your fleet, and is surrounded by four color-coded zones. Your fleet ships are distributed throughout these zones, and most can move from one zone to another in daring attack runs and defensive maneuvers.

3. Command Ability: When a race crawls into the stars it brings its particular talents and tendencies, in the form of special abilities, with it. And yes, a lot of these abilities are like cheating…but when everyone gets to cheat, that's fair, right?

Activate the Secret Weapon! What? Why Not!?

Some command abilities can be used three times per game. You may wish to keep track of these abilities' uses by placing a coin, die, or other counter on a command ship each time the ability is used.

FLEET SHIPS

Fleet ships represent the mighty vessels of war that defend your command ship while bringing hot laser-blasting death to your foes! You begin the game with four fleet ships, one in each of your command ship's zones. Each fleet ship has a **speed**, hull strength, and one or more **turrets**. Some ship types also have **ship abilities**. If the term "ship" is used in the rules or on a card, it applies to fleet ships as well as command ships.

1. Speed: This is the number of zones the fleet ship can move during the maneuver phase.

2. Hull Strength: This is how much punishment your ship can take. Ships of the same type tend to have the same hull strengths, although one dreadnought might have a hull strength of 10 while another has a hull strength of 12. Any time a fleet ship has damage cards beneath it equal to or greater than its hull strength, it is destroyed. Don't worry, though, its crew happily gave their lives for the greater good of the intergalactic empire of whichever race you're playing.

3. Turrets: Turrets determine which blasts the ship can fire.

4. Ship Type: This text tells you what class of ship this is, and in the case of carriers and minesweepers describes their special abilities.

ACTION CARDS

Action cards can be blasts (which you need to attack your enemies' fleets), or reinforcements, or evasive action maneuvers, or one of many other special effects. Many of them have **resource icons** in the top left corner.

Most action cards may only be played during the Attack phase of your turn. If the card's text is preceded by "**ANY TURN:**", however, it may be played during any step of any player's turn.

BLASTS

Blasts are played on enemy ships, representing shots fired from your fleet ships. In addition to resource icons, blasts have **turret requirements** and **damage**.

1. Turret Requirements: A blast can only be fired from a fleet ship that has a turret of the matching size and color.

2. Damage: This number indicates how much damage a blast inflicts.

RESOURCE ICONS

Resource icons can be expended in order to construct more ships for your fleet (this is described later in these rules). The three symbols are:

✦ **Star:** Represents a ship's power source.

● **Circle:** Represents the currency need to pay techs, laborers, and other personnel.

◆ **Diamond:** Represents the space-age materials (plastic, duct tape, etc.) needed to build a ship.

GAME SETUP

1. Shuffle the command ship deck, fleet ship deck, and action card deck, and place them within easy reach of all players.

2. Each player is randomly dealt a command ship (labeled 1 in the diagram below), which he places faceup in front of him.

3. Each player is randomly dealt six fleet ships facedown. Each player looks at his ships, chooses four of them, and places them facedown around his command ships, one in each zone. The two unused fleet ships are discarded. When all fleet ships (labeled 2 in the diagram) have been placed, the players turn their fleet ships faceup, leaving them in the zones in which they were initially placed.

4. Each player is randomly dealt five action cards. Players may look at their cards immediately, but they remain hidden from opponents throughout the game.

5. Each player adds up the total hull strengths of his fleet ships. The player with the lowest total strength fleet takes the first turn.

NOTE: On the first turn of the game, all players skip phases 1 and 2 as described below, instead beginning their turns in **Phase 3: Reinforce**.

TURN SEQUENCE

A turn in **Mag•Blast** is divided into five phases, each more exciting and zany than the last!

1. Discard
2. Draw
3. Reinforce
4. Maneuver
5. Attack

After you complete all five phases, the player to your left takes his turn. Play passes clockwise until there's only one command ship left flying!

PHASE 1: DISCARD

During this phase, you may discard as many cards as you wish from your hand. The more unwanted cards you discard now, the more new cards you will be able to draw in the next phase. It is common to discard blasts for which you do not have the right turrets, as well as squadrons if you do not have a carrier in your fleet. However, be careful what you throw away. . .even those cards might be useful later when you try to reinforce your fleet (see **Phase 3: Reinforce**, below).

All players skip this phase on the first turn of the game.

PHASE 2: DRAW

During this phase, you may draw cards from the action deck until you have 5 cards in your hand. If you already have 5 or more cards in your hand, skip this step. Although you may not draw if you have more than 5 cards, there is no maximum hand size; you may have 6, 10, or 20 action cards in your hand at any given time. If the action deck runs out of cards, simply reshuffle the action discard pile to form a new deck.

All players skip this phase on the first turn of the game.

PHASE 3: REINFORCE

No fleet survives on fancy moves and high-tech weaponry alone. If you want to survive, you'll have to be able to replenish your lost ships, and this is when you do it. During this phase (and *only* during this phase), you may exchange **resources** that are found on your action cards for the chance to draw new fleet ship cards from the fleet deck.

RESOURCES

Some action cards (including blasts) have one or more resource icons printed on them in the top left corner. There are three different icons, representing three different resource types: star, circle, and diamond. In order to draw a fleet ship card from the fleet deck, you must discard from your hand either:

> **Three resources of one type**
> (for example, 3 stars or 3 circles)
> *or*
> **One resource of each type**
> (1 star, 1 circle, and 1 diamond)

Because a single card can have multiple resources printed on it, you may be able to draw a new fleet ship by discarding only 2 cards.

You may draw multiple fleet ship cards in a single turn if you discard the appropriate number of resources.

Once you've drawn the fleet ship, you may designate which zone of your fleet you want it to start in, and place it there immediately. **NOTE:** You may not place a new fleet ship in a zone if it would cause that zone to have more than 3 fleet ships.

PHASE 4: MANEUVER

The tiniest scout can often maneuver through defenses that the most powerful dreadnought cannot penetrate. That is what this phase is all about.

During this phase, each of your ships may move a number of zones equal to its speed. Moving a single space consists of the ship relocating from one zone, say, the yellow zone directly in front of your command ship, to an adjacent zone, in this case either the green or the blue zones to the command ship's left or right. **NOTE:** While any number of ships may be within the same zone during maneuvering, you may not end this phase with more than three ships in any one zone.

Keep in mind that your command ship, as the center of your fleet, never moves. A few strategic notes:

Your flagship can only be attacked directly through one of your empty fleet zones. It might be wise, therefore, to make sure that there is at least one fleet ship guarding every zone, or at least guarding the zones that your enemies will be most likely to fire into.

Some of your ships, like your dreadnoughts, have a speed of zero. This means that you can never move them from their initial zone. You should therefore place them carefully, either in a zone where you would like to concentrate your fire or in a zone that you think your enemy is likely to attack heavily.

In these diagrams, John decides he wants to focus fire on his enemy's red zone. He therefore moves his scout ship (2), placing it in the red zone along with his dreadnought (3). Then, not being comfortable with

his yellow zone being left open, he moves his destroyer (5) to take the scout's place. That leaves his command ship (1) open in the blue zone, but Rob only has a measly minesweeper there, so John's not too worried.

PHASE 5: ATTACK

While attacking is the most exciting and rewarding thing you can do during this phase, there are of course other options. This is the phase during which you play many of your action cards (though probably not the defensive ones; those are mostly played on opponents' turns). The most common action cards are blasts.

FIRING BLASTS

To play a blast card, you must "fire" it from one of your fleet ships. There are three steps to firing a blast.

1. Choose the firing ship: Choose which of your fleet ships will fire the blast. The fleet ship must have a turret icon that matches the turret icon on the blast card, and it must not have fired already this turn.

BLAM! BLAM! CLICK! CLICK! CLICK!

In order to remember which ships have fired, it can be helpful to turn your ships 180 degrees (so that the tops are pointing toward your red zone instead of your yellow zone) after they let loose a blast.

2. Fire the blast: After declaring which ship will fire, draw a blast card from your hand and place it on the target ship. Note that you may only target an enemy ship in the same zone as the firing ship; if you wish to target an enemy command ship, the enemy fleet's corresponding zone must be empty.

Also, because this is a game of "screaming space battles," there is one more essential rule for firing blasts. When you fire a blast, you must make some sort of sound effect (like "Bzat!" or "KPOWIE!" or "zzzZZZOT!"). If you forget to make a sound, the blast misses and is discarded without effect.

3. Apply the damage: If the blast is not canceled and the attacker made an appropriate sound effect, slide it under the target ship card with the damage number in the lower right-hand corner showing. As soon as a ship has an amount of damage beneath it equal to or greater than its hull value, it is immediately destroyed. If a fleet ship is destroyed, it is discarded into the fleet ship discard pile and play continues. If a command ship is destroyed, its player is eliminated from the game, and all of his fleet ships and the cards in his hand are discarded.

LAUNCHING SQUADRONS

Squadrons, whether bombers or fighters, are similar to blasts in some ways: You "launch" them at opponents' ships and they do damage if they hit. However, not only is there no limit to the number of squadrons you may launch during your turn, but squadrons also return to your hand at the end of that turn! Below are the rules for using squadrons.

Carrier: You must have a carrier in your fleet from which to launch your squadrons.

Target (Fleet Ship): Bombers, like blasts, may only be targeted at enemy ships in the same zone from which they were launched. Fighters, on the other hand, can target fleet ships in any zone.

Target (Command Ship): Fighters can only be launched at an enemy command ship if that ship's fleet has at least one empty zone. Bombers, like blasts, can only be launched at an enemy command ship if the corresponding zone into which they are launched has no enemy ships in it.

ZOOOOOOMMMM . . . RATA-TAT-TAT!!!

Technically, squadrons are action cards, not blasts, so you don't *need* to make sound effects when you play them. But we recommend doing it anyway!

Damage: Squadrons that successfully attack their targets are placed on the enemy ship, doing damage as listed on the card (2 damage for fighters, 4 for bombers). However, this damage is temporary. The squadrons return to your hand at the end of your turn, and the damage they inflicted is removed. Therefore, squadron attacks only have a lasting effect if the damage they inflict is sufficient to destroy the target during the current turn.

Number of Squadrons: A carrier may launch any number of squadrons per turn.

DEFENDING AGAINST SQUADRONS

Squadrons may be defended against in three ways, with varying effects:

1. The Temporal Flux action card cancels and discards one squadron card.

2. The Evasive Action action card cancels the damage of one squadron card, but the card still returns to the player's hand at the end of the turn.

3. Defending fleets that have carriers may launch fighters into any zone to counter enemy squadrons. If played against a bomber, a defending fighter squadron cancels the enemy bomber and causes it to be discarded. The defending fighter then returns to the player's hand at the end of the turn. If played against another fighter, a defending fighter squadron cancels the enemy fighter, and both cards are immediately discarded.

PLAYING DIRECT HITS

Direct Hits and Direct Hit Effects are action cards that must be used in conjunction with blasts. They form part of a chain of cards that can be used to create devastating effects, like the immediate destruction of a ship or even its capture! Playing these cards is simple:

1. Fire a Blast: First, you must successfully hit an enemy ship with a blast of any type. Your opponent should always have a chance to consider negating the blast, either with an action card or with his command ship's special ability. If the blast is canceled in any way, you may not follow it with a Direct Hit.

2. Play a Direct Hit: You must then, before playing any other cards or taking any other actions, play a Direct Hit card on the same ship on which you just fired. Your opponent then has another chance to stave off disaster by playing defensive action cards

or using special abilities. If the Direct Hit is canceled in any way, you may not follow it with a Direct Hit Effect.

Play a Direct Hit Effect *or* Fire Again:
Immediately after playing the Direct Hit card, you may then either play a Direct Hit Effect, following the instructions on the card, or you may fire another blast from the same ship at the same target.

TURN END

After you have completed all five phases, declare that your turn is over. The player to your left now takes his turn.

ELIMINATION

When a player's command ship is destroyed, he is removed from the game. Players that are removed from the game may still participate by cheering, heckling, and of course by making sure the players still in the game are using appropriate sound effects when they fire blasts. When there is only one command ship remaining, its player is the winner!

OPTIONAL PLAY STYLES
CONTROLLED CARNAGE

The rules above describe the Free-for-All play style: Attack anyone you want. Controlled Carnage is good for introductory games with more than three players, as it limits the initial assault possible against a single fleet and reduces the number of variables each player needs to consider. Free-for-All is better when quick and brutal games are desired.

The rules for playing with Controlled Carnage are simple: You may only fire blasts and squadrons at fleets directly to your left and right (in two- and three-player games, this includes everyone in the game). You may still play action cards against or for

the benefit of other players, as well as use your command ship abilities against any player, but to attack a fleet directly across from you in a four-player game, for instance, you must first work your way through the fleets between you.

BRUTAL BARRAGE

This play style is excellent for ending a game that has been reduced from several players to just two survivors. If the active players decide that it's time to start a new game (or if the eliminated players start complaining that they're bored), the active players can agree to start a Brutal Barrage!

In Brutal Barrage, each ship is not limited to firing one blast per turn. Instead, each turret on each ship is limited to firing one blast per turn. This means that destroyers and dreadnoughts can fire two blasts each during your Attack phase, and it makes your gunships a thing to be feared!

The Brutal Barrage should start on the player's turn with the lowest current hull strength total (subtracting any blasts on his ships from the total).

SCREAMING SKIRMISH

The rules for how quickly a blast sound effect needs to be made are intentionally vague. If the player moves to play another card after playing a blast card, or suggests that he's done, *without* having made a sound, you can pretty much assume that he's forgotten and that the blast misses. For those who prefer pinpoint accuracy, however, there is the Screaming Skirmish play style.

In this play style, if a blast touches the table before a sound effect is made, it misses, lasering off into space without effect. The truly daring can still toss their blasts nonchalantly onto their opponents' ships, but they'd better be quick with the sound effects!